Key issues

in Indian philosophy

Ferenc Ruzsa

2013

To the memory of my mother,

source of all

Contents

Foreword

There are many possible approaches to the history of philosophy. One may look for consolation in Seneca, inspiration in the Upaniṣads, wisdom in Taoism, understanding in Hume. The sheer curiosity about the thinking of far-away people, distant lands and long forgotten times can motivate studying these texts. For the present author an unusually strong urge has always been to find answers for questions of the type *why*.

I first took up philosophy because I wanted to understand the world and man in it. I could not care less for the "undeveloped thought and mistaken ideas" of the first philosophers whose efforts seemed so utterly irrelevant for man in the modern age. This attitude however changed soon and drastically under the influence of excellent professors. Kornél Steiger, whose unfailing support has ever since been a determining influence, introduced me to the study of the early Greek thinkers, while the late Csaba Töttössy generated in me a persistent interest in Sanskrit, in languages and in Indology.

Studying philosophy, Greek and Sanskrit together, I was struck by the question: Why is Parmenides' thought and terminology so astonishingly close to Uddālaka Āruṇi's? Then a second, related one – Why did such surprisingly abstract metaphysical thinking appear so early? Hegel's *Weltgeist* appeared to be in its proper place in the 19th century, but the Brahman of the Upaniṣads or the Existent of Parmenides demanded an explanation. My MA thesis thirty years ago suggested an answer to the first question, while my first paper read before an international audience in 1997 approached the second. The first five chapters of this book show what I can say now in this connection.

When after ten years in another field (I was a software programmer then) I started teaching at the Department of Metaphysics at ELTE University in 1992, I started investigating the radical turn in post-Vedic Indian thought. Why was the lofty metaphysical palace of the Upaniṣads abandoned? Part of the answer is related to the new, ethical approach to philosophy that is so conspicuous in the point of departure for both Buddhism and Sāṁkhya – the universality of suffering. The murky problems of the interpretation of *duḥkha* (suffering, pain or frustration) have been addressed in Chapters VI and IX. Another source of the phenomenon is the continuing influence of the non-Vedic tradition, but since the appearance of Bronkhorst's (2007) definitive treatment of the subject, my parallel results need no re-statement here.

With growing expertise, I more and more realised how problematic and questionable is all the knowledge one can gather from elementary books; the difficulties are a magnitude greater than in the otherwise comparable Greek studies. Why is it so? It is clearly not because of the ineptitude of our predecessors, some of whom were towering giants. Several related points of inherent difficulties

seriously plaguing all efforts at understanding Indian philosophy are studied in Chapters VII, VIII and XI.

The next great turn in Indian philosophy occurred around the fourth century CE, when analytic methods appeared and questions of epistemology, logic and philosophy of language started to occupy the authors of the age. Chapters X, XII and XIII investigate this era, with the last two devoted to the puzzling question why Diṅnāga's counter-intuitive *apoha* theory (a word's meaning is its double negation) proved to be so influential.

Within the individual chapters many more questions will be asked (although frequently only implicitly), and most of the time an answer will be attempted. Even when it is not apparent, in all my studies I was hunting after answers; I never did any serious work on a text "just because it's there". This has its advantages, clearly it is very entertaining; it has its drawbacks as well. I have never mastered any narrower field to the degree that I could say that I know everything about it that can be presently known. These days this latter approach is far more usual, even expected; but for scholarship to develop the cooperation of different methods and approaches is essential.

In addition, as working in Hungary where no one before me specialised in Indian philosophy I have always felt that I have a duty to introduce as large part of that tradition as I am able to. Viewed from this angle, the chapters of this book are fairly representative. The Vedas are the focus of Chapters I and II; the Upaniṣads and Vedānta of Chapters IV, V and VII.5; Buddhism of Chapters VI and XII; Sāṁkhya of Chapters IX, X and VII.1; Nyāya of Chapter XIII and VII.2; Vaiśeṣika of Chapters VIII and VII.3–4. Yoga appears but cursorily in Chapters VI.2 and VII.5, and Mīmāṁsā is introduced only through Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's expert eyes in Chapter XIII.4.

Why-questions have the unpleasant character of not really admitting of a conclusive answer, at least not in the history of ideas. This fact has its general epistemological grounds: an explanation presupposes a lawlike co-occurrence, and that on its part presupposes reliable universals (i.e. individuals clearly belonging to a type), identifiably recurrent events or something similar. And we do not normally have here anything like that; most phenomena we try to understand are essentially unique.

This does not mean that tentative answers cannot be given to such questions or that they reflect only the author's momentary emotional state. They cannot be proven but they can be refuted and that is a clear sign of being meaningful. If I say that A is because of B, for a refutation it is enough to point out that in seven well-known cases clearly similar to A only one is similar to B.

More importantly, such explanations are not only meaningful in the technical sense: they can be really significant. They lead to new hypotheses, and these are normally of the more domesticated *what*-type, or even yes-or-no questions, thereby paving the way for new researches and new results. Of course, a positive result reinforces the original explanatory hypothesis.

To illustrate this with an example, the first chapter of this book is a hypothetical answer to the question, *why* abstract pantheism (or panpsychism) appeared in India. Part of the answer is that two peoples (Dravidian and Indo-Aryan) practicing fundamentally different religious types merged; the hymn of the Cosmic Man, the Vedic *Puruṣa-Sūkta* is a relic of this process. Now this leads to the factual questions: did Dravidian culture influence the Vedic Indians? Is not the cosmic giant an older myth, in fact part of the Indo-European heritage of the Aryans? Chapters III and II show the fruits of these investigations.

It is in the nature of things that these derived questions can lead us far away from the area we were originally investigating. We were seeking for the explanation of a particular phenomenon in

philosophy; the hypothetical answer was related to the typology of religions. The derived questions belonged to the field of comparative mythology (Chapter II) and history of languages (Chapter III). Similarly, in Chapter IX.4 while trying to find out *why* the commentators accepted an implausible interpretation for the “triad of suffering” in the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā*, we were inescapably drawn into investigating the authorship problems of a funny one-act comedy.

That is all – the rest of the book will be about philosophy proper; at least if one is prepared to take e.g. the Upaniṣads for philosophy. Of course, a large part of what is included in these texts does not belong to philosophy even in the widest sense. Still, most of the frequently read passages (like those analysed in Chapters IV and V) contain arguments (or at least their seeds) to prove their positions and they paint a coherent, meaningful and relevant picture of the world – most often a metaphysical picture. If these are not philosophy, most Presocratics should be demoted, too.

This is a book containing the results of my researches, not an introduction or a general summary of current knowledge. Still, it presents many of the central problems of ancient Indian philosophy and it is hoped that they may raise the interest of a more general audience than specialists only.

The studies in the book have been arranged chronologically, as far as it was feasible. They form a loose chain; they are best read in this order, but most of the chapters should be readily comprehensible in themselves. Where appropriate, cross-references were added.

Every effort was made that a reader with no background in Sanskrit should be able to follow the arguments and perhaps even find the problems entertaining. All Sanskrit texts are shown in translation as well and most of the technical terminology is repeatedly interpreted in brackets. This might be cumbersome for experts in the field, but to prepare two separate editions of the volume is not feasible at the moment.

In the following, I give short summaries of each chapter, focusing on what is new and original in them.

I. The birth of philosophy: The interaction of myth and magic. Philosophy is far from a universal phenomenon; we find independently arisen fully developed complete philosophies only in two traditions, the Greek and the Indian. I suggest an explanation for its origin in India; the results may be suggestive of a similar process having taken place in early Greece as well.

The first documented metaphysical system is the panpsychism of the early Upaniṣads; its fundamental principle, Brahman (or the Existent) is the essence of both the material world and the person. It is often taken to be a relatively straightforward development in priestly speculation of the Vedic *brahman,* ‘holy word’. I argue that it is rather one extremely interesting outcome of the fruitful conflict of two cultures, the native Indus Valley Culture and the immigrant Vedic (Aryan) culture. The remains of the Indus Civilization (agriculturists with their fertility-oriented magical world-view) became dominated by the less numerous but warlike Vedic people whose polytheistic religion was devotional and very masculine. The two religions were not only different, but also almost incompatible, and therefore their prolonged interaction produced surprising new ideas and practices.

The origin of Hindu pantheism and also of the abstract Brahman is here suggested to be the result of combining elements and motifs from both traditions. These two concepts are descendants of the (essentially non-Vedic) Earth Goddess: in pantheism, she is turned into a male and made more personal, while the neuter Brahman is her deanthropomorphisation. The motive for both these changes might have been the alienness of the fertility-cult and its image of the dominating Great Mother, a female, to the proudly patriarchal Aryans – while the explanatory power of a single universal principle must have been very attractive.

II. The Cosmic Giant – an Indo-European myth? An essay in experimental mythology. The argument of Chapter I relied heavily on the supposition that pantheism is an innovation (or at least a new feature in the Vedic tradition), first appearing in the late Vedic cosmogonical hymn about the sacrificial dismemberment of Puruṣa. However, the general opinion of scholars is that the hymn is very late indeed, but the myth itself is immensely old.

Of the few generally accepted 'facts' of Indo-European comparative mythology perhaps the best known is the cosmogonical myth in which the universe arises from the dismembered limbs of a primeval giant. In its fullest form it can be found in the Icelandic *Edda* (the dismemberment of the ice-giant Ymir) and in the Indian *R̥g-Veda* (the sacrifice of Puruṣa, the cosmic Man). The agreement of many details seems convincing; Bruce Lincoln (1986) has argued especially forcefully for a common Indo-European origin.

The issue is of vast importance. First, this would be almost the only clear example proving a common Indo-European mythology; second, it would also demonstrate the ability of such complex cultural phenomena to survive for several millennia in illiterate societies. Third, as we find in the Puruṣa-hymn the first documented occurrence of the pantheistic world-view so fundamental in Indian thought (culminating in the cosmic vision of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*), an essential feature of Upaniṣadic and Vedāntic thought would appear as ancient and thus not requiring an explanation for its arising.

This chapter however tries to argue that the parallelism is due to the natural tendencies of human thinking, not to common origin. First, some relevant old Indian material is collected: not only cosmogonical myths but also those passages where a detailed man/cosmos analogy is visible. In this way, we get a fuller picture of the anthropomorphically understood cosmos than from the *Puruṣa-Sūkta* alone.

Then this is compared to myths of non-Indo-European peoples. The mythologem is found in other cultures as well (Aztec, native North American, Chinese, Tahitian, Finnish, Mongolian and Sumerian). An experimental test points in the same direction. Having asked ten year old children and university students, "If the world arose from the body of a giant, which of his limbs became what?" their answers dominantly gave the details found in the hypothetical 'original Indo-European' myth, as suggested by Lincoln.

It seems that the main factors motivating the association of a human part with a cosmic phenomenon are constituent material (breath–wind), position (head : body : feet – sky : atmosphere : earth) and form (ear : cave); and these are perceived rather universally, in different ages and different cultures.

As in the oldest Indo-European material we find no trace of the myth, probably it came into being either independently in the near-historical period. Alternatively, it might be local developments of a common borrowed theme perhaps of Near-Eastern origin. In the latter case either the wandering Aryans (whose contact with the Middle East in the 15th century BC is documented), or the people of the Harappan civilization (who had extensive trade contacts with Mesopotamia) could be the transmitters of the idea.

III. Dravidian influence on Indo-Aryan. The theory put forward in Chapter I presupposes an intensive interaction of the Aryans and the indigenous people, the inheritors of the Indus Civilisation. This must have left recognisable traces in the language of the Aryans. The influence of the phonetic structure of proto-Dravidian (i.e. the ancestor of the second great language family in India) was very strong, and I think that the evidence is fairly compelling.

Dravidian influence on Sanskrit is now generally accepted, especially in loan-words, the appearance of retroflexion, the extensive use of gerunds and the quotative *iti* particle. The loss of old syntax and the appearance of the syntactical 'compounds' might be considered even more important.

Here only phonetics will be investigated, but in a wider perspective: from the earliest Vedic up to late Middle Indic. All the important developments in Indo-Aryan phonetics during these some twenty centuries could be interpreted as due to a single constant and strong influence – that of a language with a phonetic structure similar to Tamil (that has the most archaic phonetic build-up among the Dravidian languages).

The following features will be considered:

– The appearance of retroflex pronunciation and even of retroflex phonemes already in the *R̥g-Veda*.
– The convergence of the vowel system, complete by the age of Pali (4th century BCE).
– The loss of word-final consonants. Already quite marked in Vedic, complete already in Pali.
– The gradual loss of sibilants. First, the voiced sibilants disappear in the earliest Vedic age (and the peculiar sandhi resulting in *r* for retroflex *ẓ* can be seen as Sanskritization of the Dravidian pronunciation of *ẓ*). In the Prakrits only one sibilant remains (in most dialects *s*), and even that weakens into an aspiration in clusters. So only initial and intervocalic *s* occurs, exactly as in Tamil (where it is an allophone of the phoneme *c*).
– The loss of consonant clusters in initial and medial position in Prakrits follows the pattern of Tamil.
– The loss of the voiced/unvoiced phonemic opposition in middle Prakritic dialects corresponds to the situation in Tamil.

Since several of the features analysed will be shown to have been present already at the phase of the oral composition of the *R̥g-Veda*, it follows that ideological interchange was also possible, or rather unavoidable.

A further important consequence is that as the culturally dominant substrate language for the Vedic *r̥ṣi*s was Dravidian, and the *R̥g-Veda* was composed within the area of the former Indus Culture, it seems safe to deduce that the Indus Valley Civilization was (at least partly) Dravidian-speaking. This suggestion is not new, but so far, evidence was lacking.

IV. Language and reality: Uddālaka's thesis and Śaṅkara's interpretation. The sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* is arguably the most interesting Upaniṣadic text. It is an early exposition of panpsychism, giving many arguments and convincing examples; it was also highly influential, supplying scriptural authority to the rigorous monism of Śaṅkara, whose Advaita Vedānta is the 'representative Hindu philosophy' of the last millennium. Śaṅkara's understanding of the text has been generally followed by modern interpreters, whether acknowledging this or not.

In the Upaniṣad, Uddālaka Āruṇi promises his son, Śvetaketu to teach him "that teaching which makes the unheard heard, the unthought thought and the unknown known". This seems to imply omniscience. To the astonished boy he offers by way of explanation three similes, all referring to objects being known by their substance (e.g. pots by clay), and adds the refrain: *vācârambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāma-dheyaṁ mr̥ttikêty eva satyam,* i.e. "the transformation is a verbal handle, a name – while the reality is just this: 'It's clay.'" (Tr. Olivelle 1998.)

This is notoriously unclear. For Śaṅkara it supports *māyā-vāda,* 'illusion-theory': ultimately only the substance, i.e. *Brahman,* the Existent is real; the virtual modifications, the apparent diversity of the empirical world is only conventional, "depends on speech", it is a product of our linguistically determined conceptual schemes.

Analysing Śaṅkara's commentary to the passage I will focus on the obvious (although sometimes seemingly harmless) distortions. Identifying their motives, it will be possible to uncover the original meaning of the text; and the internal structure of Āruṇi's argument will confirm our results.

In fact, the text does not support any form of illusion-theory. The *vācârambhaṇa* refrain could be interpreted roughly as follows: By speech, we first grasp the specific; but a proper appellation would show the substance (the lasting or 'real'). That is, we normally name things by their more or less ephemeral form (jug, pot, bowl...); but the matter or stuff they are made of (clay) is constant, so in a sense it is more fundamental. Moreover, because types of stuff are more basic, there is less variety among them – in fact, there are only three final constituents *(rūpa)* of the world. Consequently, in contrast to the infinite variety of the individual objects, they can be completely known, so Āruṇi did in fact teach – not omniscience, but truly *universal* knowledge; like the laws of modern physics.

V. Parmenides and the early Upaniṣads. The sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* stands apart from the other Upaniṣads in a number of ways, and so is Parmenides' philosophy unique in the history of ideas in Europe. These two texts, however, show an astonishing range of parallelisms in fundamental approach, in many philosophical notions and even in their terminology, although they cannot be called natural or trivial.

Both Parmenides and Uddālaka Āruṇi focus on the unchanging, impersonal Absolute, the fundamental reality and truth, and they consider it the source of infallible knowledge. By contrast, the world of our everyday experience is characterised by change and dependence on human concepts or language; it is derived from the Absolute not directly but through a small (and unusual) set of elements. And both philosophers call the Absolute 'the Existent', changing phenomena 'names' and the fundamental elements 'forms'.

Comparing further details, all the attributes of the Existent and some of the arguments, also taking into consideration other old Indian material, I will try to prove that convergence of thought or parallel development is out of the question – there must have been actual contact. Since it cannot be determined with any degree of certainty which philosopher was earlier, indirect evidence (the cultural context) will be considered, and it suggests that Parmenides was the borrower. After a cursory investigation of the possible means of contact, it will appear that the most probable scenario is that Parmenides travelled to India, learned the language and some important philosophical texts, and brought them back to Greece.

VI. The types of suffering in Buddhism. Whereas the focus of the Upaniṣads is dominantly metaphysical, the Buddha firmly rejected any metaphysical discussion. Apart from practical questions of the Way like meditation or the proper behaviour of the monk, his teaching is about anthropology only; even e.g. problems of causality are analysed from this particular angle. And the starting point and fundamental tenet of Buddhist anthropology is the painfully limited human existence, often (although somewhat misleadingly) expressed as the universality of suffering.

In this chapter, an analysis is attempted of suffering, especially the three kinds of suffering as it appears in the earliest sources and in the late *Mahā-Vyutpatti*. The not-too-clear classic formula, *duḥkha-duḥkhatā, saṁskāra-duḥkhatā, vipariṇāma-duḥkhatā* will be shown to mean the suffering caused by pain, by compositeness and by change (to the worse). It appears that the original understanding of *saṁskāra-duḥkhatā* was probably not the suffering related to subliminal impressions (as several commentators and modern interpreters take it) but rather the suffering inherent in anything of a composite nature.

Comparing these three kinds of suffering to some non-Buddhistic triads (e.g. in the *Yoga-Sūtra*) and similar concepts in the Pāli Canon and its commentaries, a structural connection is suggested to

the *tri-lakṣaṇa,* the three characteristics of existence in general according to Buddhism: everything is painful, impermanent and insubstantial (*duḥkha, anitya, anātman*). Further, it will become apparent that the classical formulation may be but an elaboration of the simple, more naive and very frequent series, old age – disease – death.

VII. The vagueness of the philosophical Sūtras: No date, no author, no fixed text or meaning. The next phase in the history of Indian philosophy is the appearance of the various schools with their more or less complete philosophical systems, sets of characteristic tenets and the root texts embodying them, the Sūtras. The philosophical Sūtras are extremely important in many ways; most of them are the oldest surviving texts of their respective schools.

It has been generally recognized that the Sūtras contain some interpolated material; in this chapter the suggestion is put forward that their compositeness is of a far more fundamental nature. Analysing several blocks of text from different Sūtras, it will be shown that many sentences are misunderstood or misconstrued by the next. In some cases several (up to five) reworkings of the text can be reconstructed. It can also be shown that there were parallel, at times significantly different versions of the text.

The picture emerging as a result of these investigations will be that during the period of their formation (that could be as much as half a millennium) the Sūtras were not texts proper but memory aids for students. They must have been something like our handouts (but purely oral at the beginning), with different additions, deletions and interpretations by teachers in different places and times, without any fixed order or an identifiable number of contributors.

The edited form of these texts that has come down to us derives from a late collector-editor who most probably wrote some sort of commentary as well on the Sūtras. This unusual textual history suggests that we cannot really speak about the authors, the time of their writing or even their relative priority. Moreover, in some cases there is no point in speaking about the 'true' meaning of a given sentence or paragraph – it may have had several interpretations in different historical contexts, and there is no available standard to establish which interpretation is more fundamental or original.

VIII. The errors of the copyists: A case study of Candrānanda's Vaiśeṣika commentary. While collecting material for a (still unfinished) new critical edition of Candrānanda's Commentary on the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*, I realised that a relatively recent (dated 1874) Devanāgarī manuscript is a direct copy of an older one written in the Jaina Devanāgarī script. The first part of the chapter will demonstrate this fact; luckily here we have some unusually clear indicators of the copying process, e.g. a correction in the older manuscript misplaced in the more recent one.

In the second part, I am going to analyse the fate of errors in the course of copying, in this specific case. How often does the copyist try to correct errors in his source? What kind of new errors does he introduce, and why? What does he do when he cannot read a character? The answers are surprising. Although the copyist knows Sanskrit, he *never* tries to correct his text; he copies even absolutely trivial mistakes. Even when he unconsciously corrects some error in the original, if he notices it, he corrects it back to the original, meaningless form. Most of the (innumerable) errors that the scribe introduces are the result of carelessness and simple inadvertence, typically not involving a conscious or unconscious misinterpretation of the text or a part of it. When he cannot read a character, he simply tries to copy its form, its outline, without interpreting it in any way.

The general result of all this is that of the 19, more or less meaningful new readings produced, only four are easier readings, but probably they are correct; and there are 15 more difficult readings, all of them probably false. Therefore, we have no new (faulty) *lectio facilior,* while there are 15 new *lectiones difficiliores*, none of them the original reading! This suggests that a re-thinking of the

frequent editorial practice to prefer the *lectio difficilior* might not be out of place, at least in the Indian context. Of course, this single case could be atypical, but I do not think so. More probably, the attitude of the scribe might change when he copies a simpler, continuous text that is easy to understand; after all, it would be extremely presumptuous to try to correct a Sūtra text that even great scholars have difficulty to grasp. In any case, further investigations would be most welcome.

IX. Pain and its cure: The aim of philosophy in Sāṁkhya. T

The central work of the Sāṁkhya philosophy, the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* starts with defining the aim of philosophy: escape from suffering.

> From the blows of the triad of suffering [arises] the inquiry into the means of repelling it; 'It being seen, that is useless' If [you say so, I say] 'No', because that is not absolute and final.

According to the unanimous interpretation of the commentaries, the 'triad of suffering' is *ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaivika*, originating internally, externally and divinely. In this chapter, I will try to show that this classification is not only odd and implausible, but it is also inconsistent with the *Kārikā* itself (the problematic words occur in *kārikā* 50 and 53 with a different role and interrelation); also, it does not fit the philosophical tradition. In all probability, it was mistakenly taken over by the first commentator from the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā*, an early medical treatise. (There an analysis of pathological states is intended, not of the human condition; as a kind of anamnesis, it could be useful to determine the appropriate cure.)

Accepting this interpretation was greatly facilitated by the presence of this triad in earlier Sāṁkhya tradition. The terms were there, although their function was completely different: *adhyātma,* 'relating to the self' is an organ (e.g. eye); *adhibhūta,* 'relating to the beings' is its object (colour); and *adhidaivata,* 'relating to the divinity' is a tutelary deity (Sun). Since the most important textual source for this interpretation is the short *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra* (with its commentaries), its chronological relation to the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* had to be considered.

Most scholars consider the *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra* a quite late text (14th century), about a millennium younger than the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā.* Since this is an extremely important question, in a fairly long excursus I will prove that it is not so: in all probability the *Tattva-Samāsa* is the oldest Sāṁkhya text that we still have, and it was widely known and used from the earliest times. Even the commentaries of the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* quote from it often. The decisive proof for its early date will be a significant quotation from the *Tattva-Samāsa* in an early philosophical comedy; the latter is explicitly mentioned in an inscription safely dated to ca. 600 CE.

Having rejected the commentarial interpretation, a new analysis is needed for the three kinds of suffering. It is suggested that the original intention of Īśvarakṛṣṇa might have been to refer to the misery of old age, sickness and death. Though this seems overtly Buddhistic, a lot of evidence is adduced that it was also familiar in Sāṁkhya circles. The 55th *kārikā* itself corroborates this result, for it refers to "the suffering caused by old age and death."

With this understanding, a second problem arises as to what is the means 'seen' (*dṛṣṭa*) for repelling the triple suffering. The commentators' answer – some worldly means such as medicine – does not fit well with a triad that includes death. My proposed solution is that *dṛṣṭa* is here a technical term meaning perception or experience, and it refers metaphorically to the practical schools of Yoga, or indeed any system of meditational practice (like Buddhism) without proper metaphysical grounding.

That in the *Kārikā* the term for perception as a source of valid knowledge (*pramāṇa*) is *dṛṣṭa* (instead of the usual *pratyakṣa*) is well known. The metaphorical use of vision or perception for Yoga

is illustrated by two *Mokṣa-Dharma* passages, one including the decisive words *pratyakṣa-hetavo yogāḥ* ("the adherents of Yoga have experience as their means") which is parallel to our *hetau / dr̥ṣṭe*, "as there is an experimental means".

Lastly it will be shown that Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa' criticism ("it is not absolute and final") is consistent with this interpretation: the *samādhi* of Yoga or Buddhism is indeed a temporary state; and this argument was known in India, although the testimony to this that I could quote is later (14^{th} century).

X. Inference, reasoning and causality in the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā*. The *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* contains only scanty references to matters of logic. Its commentaries cannot really help in clarifying the details, as their positions are mutually contradictory and quite often logically too naive. The *Yukti-Dīpikā* and to some extent Vācaspati Miśra's *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Kaumudī* has important analyses, but these are more closely connected to contemporary logical debate than to the classical Sāṁkhya position; often the terminology and even the basic categories are new.

Still it seems possible to reconstruct Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's conception of inference, because it is integrated in two ways into his system. First – and although it seems natural, it is a very rare phenomenon in philosophy – his reasoning generally conforms to his theory; he can do this because his 'syllogism' is not too specific, it lacks unnecessary detail. Second, his theory of cognition is in harmony with his theory of the world: inference and causation have a parallel structure, because inference reproduces (in the mind) causal relations.

The Sāṁkhya theory of causation, *sat-kārya* is usually translated as 'the effect exists [in the cause]', i.e. nothing new is ever produced. This curious idea may be meaningful in Advaita Vedānta, where the effect, the world is irreal and completely inherent in the cause, the Absolute (Brahman). In the Sāṁkhya philosophy, it is impossible; I will suggest that the natural interpretation of Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's text gives the translation 'an effect of existents' for *sat-kārya*, and that implies but a moderate form of determinism.

The parallelism of causation and inference is seen among other things in that both of them are strongly 'object-oriented'. The causal relation of *sat-kārya* (caused by an existent [thing]) obtains typically between things (and not e.g. events or states); similarly, we infer from the *liṅga*, 'sign' (that is either a thing or a quality of a thing) another thing, the *liṅgin*, 'the one with the sign'. Therefore, inference is not a relation between sentences or propositions. As a consequence of this, there are only two members in the inferential process: the *liṅga* or 'mark' in the place of the premise, and the *liṅgin* or 'the thing marked' instead of the conclusion.

There are three kinds of inference, of which the first two (not even named in the text) are closely related, but not very important in philosophising. On the simplest interpretation, these are causal inferences in either direction: A and B, both empirical, clearly defined, stand in a causal relation A ► B; one of them is currently, *accidentally*, not seen. The inference from A to B, i.e. A → B is probably called *pūrvavat* ('having the earlier'), while B → A would be *śesavat* ('having the remainder').

The third kind of inference is *sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭa,* 'seen by the similarity'. This vague term is given a new and precise interpretation that is consistent with Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's use of it. Here the inference is not based on *natural kinds* (*jāti*) having a known relation (e.g. fire and smoke, causally related), but rather on *higher universals* (*sāmānya*) and their connections (e.g. cause and effect, having essentially similar qualities).

For metaphysical purposes the important case of *sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭa* is when the (normally causal) relation A ► B is known, and we infer B' → A', where B' is analogous to B (or superordinated to B, or belongs to a category superordinated to B), and A' is *essentially* not empirical.

A modern formalisation is attempted (with relatively standard, conservative tools), and it clearly corroborates our preliminary intuition that the simple *liṅga–liṅgin* structure is not really adequate to analyse *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* inferences.

XI. Polysemy, misunderstanding and reinterpretation. A key contrast of European and Indian attitudes to philosophy is that Europeans prefer to be original while Indians (after the age of the Sūtras) always present their ideas as being faithful even to the letter of the tradition of their schools. In Europe, the sources of knowledge are experience and rational thinking, while Indians never forget the 'word', tradition, what we learn from others, the accumulated knowledge of the race. A possible source of this difference may be that the fundamental unit of society in India is the caste, not the individual.

A formal outcome of this attitude is the overwhelming dominance of commentaries over independent works. The problem is that the commentator is always bound to agree with his root text – and this results in an inability for modernisation and, even worse, in disregarding plain truth.

Luckily the picture is no that dark, but it comes at a price. Beyond the freely allowed additions to the topics discussed earlier in the tradition, an untenable old position could be 'forgotten', demoted to the status of a pedagogical device or reinterpreted. Reinterpretations could even occur spontaneously, without the author noticing it, and many features of the tradition (the structure of Sanskrit, the original vagueness of the philosophical Sūtras) contribute to the ease with which they are introduced.

The most devastating tool of reinterpretation was to change the meaning of key terms. It happened so frequently that there is hardly any technical term in Indian philosophy with one unambiguous meaning. The resulting polysemy does not only make the modern interpreter's life more difficult, but our classical authors themselves were often lost in the maze of meanings, like when discussing problems of *śabda* – physical sound / word / communicated information / scripture.

In the last two chapters, an extremely nasty example will be analysed: *apoha*, the key term of the Buddhist theory of meaning.

XII. An unknown solution to the problem of universals: Diṅnāga's apoha theory. After a short introduction to universals, an overview of the Indian situation follows. That the two fundamental positions, realism and nominalism are taken by Hindus and Buddhists respectively is shown to be not a mere coincidence. For a Hindu the eternality and infallibility of their holy scripture, the Vedas was a compelling reason to accept eternal words with eternal and objective meanings, and these would be real universals. For Buddhists on the other hand, their central doctrine that everything is transitory made it impossible to accept anything eternal, so they had to reject the existence of real universals. Most Buddhist philosophers therefore opted for nominalism, under the name of *apoha*-theory, although the original concept of *apoha* by Diṅnāga was in fact neither realist nor nominalist.

A hitherto unnoticed source of Diṅnāga is a verse of Vasubandhu. There the key expression *anyâpohe dhiyā* is normally misinterpreted as meaning 'mentally removing the qualities of a thing'; while I suggest that its real import is 'distinguishing the thing from others by the mind'. Diṅnāga took the word *anyâpoha* and its proper meaning for the basis of his theory of meaning – and it was misunderstood by his readers, too.

The Nyāya philosopher Uddyotakara hit first upon the ever since standard misinterpretation of *apoha.* Instead of 'difference' he translated it as 'negation', so 'difference from others' became 'negation of non-A-s', i.e. double negation! Then it was all too easy to reject this position as ridiculously tautological: the meaning of A would be 'not non-A'.

After this criticism had been perpetuated and somewhat elaborated by the influential Mīmāṁsā philosopher Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, later Buddhists (notably Dharmakīrti) started to use *apoha* in the sense of nominal or conceptual universal. And with this the picture becomes really chaotic, for the three widely different senses of *apoha* (characteristic difference; double negation; nominal universal) all remain in use and they are hardly ever distinguished explicitly.

Even the double negation theory could be serviceable for a nominalist as an argument against realism. Since 'not A' is accepted by all parties as not being a real universal, so 'not non-A' is not a real universal either. However, it is equivalent to 'A', so that again cannot be a real universal.

Diṅnāga's first use of *apoha* is unusual. He says that a word occurs only with its referent (excluding other things, *anyâpohena*), so we can *infer* from the word the presence of the referent: therefore, verbal testimony is but a case of inference.

His characteristic use of the term, inherited from Vasubandhu, is in the sense of difference. It says that to know the meaning of 'cow' is to know in what a cow differs from other things *(anyâpoha)*, how a cow differs from non-cows. In order to be competent with the word you do not have to know all cows; you do not need to know everything about cows either. It may be enough to know that it has horns and says moo.

This approach to the meaning of words and concepts is closely parallel to the Aristotelian analysis of definition through specific differences. A historical influence is far from improbable: even the term *apoha* may be a literal translation of Greek διαφορά (difference).

Diṅnāga's *apoha* theory is shown to be quite powerful. It can do all the job of supposed universals and in fact quite a lot more. It explains easily the different logical functions of words (as predicates and as referring to individuals), their different combinations in expressions and their relations, notably *a priori* relations. It can handle elegantly many problems of language philosophy like language acquisition, changing content of the same concept or successful communicating with different competence levels. It can even bridge the gap between the inherently private and the public.

On this understanding, *apoha* is not a nominal universal – it is not an internal or external 'thing' at all: it is a rule or a procedure of differentiating. This radically new approach to the problem is, however, perfectly fit for its expected ideological role in Buddhism (rejecting any eternal entity and with it also the Vedas).

XIII. Jayanta on the meaning of words. The still untranslated monumental classic of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, the *Nyāya-Mañjarī* has a long section on universals that starts with a detailed criticism of his nominalist opponents, i.e. the *apoha* theories of the Buddhists. His treatment of the topic is quasi-historical: he starts with the early *apoha* theory of Diṅnāga as a criticism of the naive realist position, and then re-iterates most of the arguments of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa against *apoha.* As a response, two distinct conceptualist reinterpretations of the Buddhist theory follow by Dharmakīrti and Dharmottara. In conclusion, he refutes their arguments thereby showing the superiority of the realist Nyāya approach.

His arguments are reproduced in this chapter in a form that I hope will be seen as a promising new path to introducing Indian philosophy to the general public. It is not a word-by-word, sentence-by-sentence translation but a re-telling of Jayanta's train of thought without adding or dropping anything, yet in a language and form that can be followed by a modern reader, grasping all the arguments and evaluating their strength or otherwise for herself. In addition, many, mostly philosophical comments will be added in footnotes. Often they will help to clarify Jayanta's thought, and quite frequently, they will suggest criticisms or alternative views on a disputed point, thereby encouraging the reader to enter

the debate. I wished to bring out clearly that what we have here is not some oriental or historical curiosity but perfectly relevant philosophical analysis addressing issues debated in contemporary philosophy with valid and important arguments.

It would be clearly pointless to list here even the focal themes of Jayanta like theory of relations, correspondence of objects and concepts – there are simply too many of them. Nevertheless, two of his exceptional strengths may be mentioned. First, and perhaps better known is his convincing presentation of arguments both for and against a position: he never opts to misunderstand an opponent's convincing argument nor does he choose the easy way pretending that he does not know it. Second and quite interesting in the light of our Chapter XI is Jayanta's effort at clarifying the different meanings of several technical terms as used by other philosophers.

* * * * * * * * *

Much of the material collected here was already presented to different audiences and much of it was published in one form or another. Here I list those papers that have already appeared in print and are reproduced here without substantial modifications:

Chapter I "The Fertile Clash: The Rise of Philosophy in India." In: Csaba Dezső (ed.): *Indian Languages and Texts through the Ages. Essays of Hungarian Indologists in Honour of Prof. Csaba Töttössy.* Manohar, Delhi 2007, 63–85

Chapter III "The influence of Dravidian on Indo-Aryan phonetics." In: Jared S. Klein – Kazuhiko Yoshida (eds.): *Indic Across the Millennia: from the Rigveda to Modern Indo-Aryan.* Hempen Verlag, Bremen 2013, 145–152

Chapter IV "The meaning of Āruṇi's promise." *Indologica Taurinensia* 30 (2004), 229–235

Chapter V "Parmenides' road to India." *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 42 (2002), 29–49

Chapter VI "The types of suffering in the Mahāvyutpatti and the Pāli Canon." *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 56 (2003/1), 49–56

Chapter VII "The authorlessness of the philosophical sūtras." *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 63 (2010/4), 427–442

Chapter VIII "Two MSS of Candrānanda's Vṛtti on the Vaiśeṣikasūtra and the errors of the copyists." In: Johannes Bronkhorst – Karin Preisendanz (eds.): *From Vasubandhu to Caitanya. Studies in Indian Philosophy and Its Textual History.* Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 2010, 173–183

Chapter X "Inference, reasoning and causality in the Sāṁkhya-kārikā." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 31 (2003/1-3), 285–301

In all cases, beyond simple re-editing, the text was reconsidered, and then modified as needed; translations and some references were added.

Sanskrit texts are presented uniformly in a form that I think is most readable for students of the language, with punctuation, capitals, hyphenation and a caret for vowel-sandhi (e.g. â) added. Where my quoted source had a typo, it was corrected in brackets. I consistently use *r̥, r̥̄, l̥* and *ṁ* even where my source has *ṛ, ṝ, ḷ* and *ṃ* – except in bibliographical data where the orthography of the edition is followed.

Acknowledgements

During the years, several of my researches were supported by the Hungarian National Research Fund, OTKA; the project numbers were T 21224, T 034446, T 043629 and K 75550.

Many people have helped me in various ways to develop the ideas presented in this volume. Sadānanda Dās and Añjaneya Śarma gave my Sanskrit the impetus to develop into a friendly tool. M.A. Lakshmitathachar, Dominic Goodall, Géza Bethlenfalvy, Ernst Steinkellner, Patrick Mc Allister and Harunaga Isaacson offered me invitations and the hospitality of their institutions in Melkote, Pondicherry, Delhi, Vienna and Hamburg.

Several people gave me inspiration and support through discussions, sending me books, reading and correcting my papers and offering comments; among them I would like to particularly thank Lars Martin Fosse, Péter Lautner, Alex Watson, Mónika Szegedi, Tibor Körtvélyesi, Deven Patel, Csaba Dezső, Dániel Balogh, István Bodnár and András Várnai. Many of my papers were first (and repeatedly) read by my wife Ágnes Ruzsa and my daughter Kata Ruzsa.

From the many people who at conferences, seminars and workshops, sometimes before or after them, discussed with me about one or another of the themes of this book, suggesting ideas and offering criticism, I can mention only some: Harunaga Isaacson, Kornél Steiger, Gyula Wojtilla, Eli Franco, Karin Preisendanz, Walter Slaje, my late father Imre Ruzsa, Hans Heinrich Hock, Brendan S. Gillon and Claus Oetke.

My heartfelt thanks to all of them, to the many students with whom I read and discussed these texts – and to all those friends and colleagues whom I failed to mention.

I. The birth of philosophy

The interaction of myth and magic

1. Alien religion in the Veda

It is more or less an accepted fact that philosophy, at least in its earlier stages, is not independent of the religious background on which it grows. It is markedly so in the Indian tradition where all systems – except the little known Lokāyata materialism – are aiming at salvation or release, *mokṣa, niḥśreyasa, apavarga, kaivalya* or *nirvāṇa*. The terminology may be different, but the fundamental idea, leaving the karmic cycle of transmigration for ever, is the same.

If this connection can be taken for granted it is natural to ask, *how* religion influenced philosophy. What might have been their connection "at the beginning"? Their contrast seems fairly obvious: religion is normally a relatively rigid, closed system manifested in typically public actions (i.e. ritual) of a community, whereas the very essence of philosophy is that it is an open-ended, private, theoretical enterprise. It is true of course that sometimes philosophy is completely subservient to religion – though in spite of the obvious technical similarities, I would hesitate to call this kind of activity 'philosophy' at all. Sometimes philosophers elaborate on originally religious ideas giving them more depth or a more abstract character. And sometimes religion appropriates the philosophers' lines of thinking.

There is another, more interesting and fundamental possibility of contact: philosophy may react to a crisis or conflict in religion. A religion may grow old and get outdated; a typical philosophical reaction to this might be a general scepticism about the existence or at least the importance of the gods or the effectivity of the traditional rites. Something like this may have been going on in ancient India in the post-Vedic age: many people, young and old, left their homes for ever to become wandering religious seekers. This *parivrājaka* or *śramaṇa* movement culminating in the appearance of the Buddha has been seen in this light, i.e. that an essential motivation for their renunciation of the world and also its rites was the unsatisfactoriness of the aged, rigid Vedic ritualism.[1]

Long before that, already in the age of the *Ṛg-Veda* some people doubted the existence of *Índra*: "He about whom they ask, 'Where is he?', or they say of him, the terrible one, 'He does not exist', he

[1] Radhakrishnan (1929: 147–149, 272–276, 352–360). Nowadays this over-simplified explanation is no longer tenable; cf. Pande (1995: 258–261, 315–338). For a more detailed account, see e.g. Olivelle (1993) and Bronkhorst (1993). I have argued in Ruzsa (2009) that the Buddha did not even know the Vedic tradition, agreeing with Bronkhorst (2007) that Eastern Indian culture at that time was essentially unrelated to Vedism.

who diminishes the flourishing wealth of the enemy as gambling does – believe in him! He, my people, is Indra."[2]

As this hymn is generally accepted to be quite old,[3] we cannot really think of the Vedic religion already being antiquated; perhaps we should look for another source of this scepticism. Although it seems impossible to prove it, the verse preceding this one seems to give us the clue: "He by whom all these changes were rung, who drove the race of the Dāsas down into obscurity, who took away the flourishing wealth of the enemy as a winning gambler takes the stake – he, my people, is Indra."[4]

The *Dāsá*s or *Dásyu*s[5] were the black-coloured, snub-nosed (?)[6] people the Aryans found in India.[7] They were rich and civilised and had many cities or forts: "Indra and Agni [Fire], ye cast down the ninety forts which Dāsas held…"[8] Some of them must have been killed or driven out of their land: "For fear of thee forth fled the dark-hued races, scattered abroad, deserting their possessions, / When, glowing, O Vaiśvānara [Fire], for Pūru, thou Agni didst light up and rend their castles. ... Thou dravest Dasyus from their home, O Agni, and broughtest forth broad light to light the Ārya."[9] Others were subjugated in great numbers: it is clearly shown by the word *dāsa* later meaning simply a slave or servant.[10]

---

[2] R̥V II.12,5 tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 161). The original in R̥V:

yáṁ smā pr̥chánti kúha séti ghorám utém āhur naiṣó astī́ty enam |
só aryáḥ puṣṭī́r víja ivā́ mināti śrád asmai dhatta sá janāsa índraḥ ||

[3] In general the "family books" (II–VIII) are considered the oldest material in the *R̥g-Veda-Saṁhitā*; among them the VIII. is somewhat later (Witzel 1997: 261–266).

[4] R̥V II.12,4 tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 161).

yénemā́ víśvā cyávanā kr̥tā́ni yó dā́saṁ várṇam ádharaṁ gúhā́kaḥ |
śvaghnī́va yó jigīvā́ṅ lakṣám ā́dad aryáḥ puṣṭā́ni sá janāsa índraḥ ||

[5] On the somewhat vexing question of the relation of these two terms see Hillebrandt (1999: II. 159–160). In general, it seems that *Dásyu* is used when difference in religion is in the focus, while *Dāsá* may be the name of a (hostile) people or a designation of some tribes.

[6] This often repeated characterization (e.g. Oldenberg 1988: 82) rests upon a single occurrence (R̥V V.29,10cd) of the word *anā́s,* meaning either 'noseless' (*a-nā́s*) or 'mouthless' (*an-ā́s*): "Thou slewest noseless Dasyus with thy weapon, and in their home o'erthrewest hostile speakers." (Tr. Griffith 1973: 249.)

anā́so dásyūṅr amr̥ṇo vadhéna ní duryoṇá āvr̥ṇaṅ mr̥dhrávācaḥ ||

Given the context, 'mouthless' – i.e. unintelligibly speaking – may be more appropriate (cf. Hock 1999: 156).

For a comprehensive account of all the relevant passages on the *Dāsá*s and *Dásyu*s see Macdonell–Keith (1912: I. 347–349, 356–358), or, with all details quoted, Hale (1986: 146–169).

[7] More recently, Asko Parpola forwarded the theory that the *Dāsá*s were not the indigenous black population but an earlier (ca. 2000 BCE) wave of Aryan immigration. For a summary see Parpola (2004: 480–481). In fact this was suggested already a century ago by Hillebrandt (1999: I. 333–53), but his excellent arguments met with flat refusal only (Keith 1925: 7–8, 234).

Hock (1999) questions that either *Dāsá* or *Dásyu* could ever be interpreted as racial terms. He tries to explain all references to their being black as having moral or ideological value only.

[8] R̥V III.12,6ab tr. Griffith (1973: 167).

índrāgnī navatím púro dāsápatnīr adhūnutam |

[9] R̥V VII.5,3 and 5,6cd tr. Griffith (1973: 336).

tvád bhiyā́ víśa āyann ásiknīr asamanā́ jáhatīr bhójanāni |
vaiśvānara pūráve śóśucānaḥ púro yád agne daráyann ádīdeḥ ||
... tváṁ dásyūṅr ókaso agna āja urú jyótir janáyann ā́ryāya ||

[10] On this transition of meaning see Hillebrandt (1999: II. 154–157).

The spiritual life of the *Dāsá*s was markedly different from that of the invaders.[11] They were without rites and ordinances (*akarmán, avratá*), made no offerings (*áyajvan* or *áyajyu*), said no prayers (*ábrahman*) and they had no gods (*ádeva* or *ádevayu*).[12] We cannot say whether the people who ask where Indra is and even say that he does not exist were these city-dwelling aboriginals or some Aryans led to scepticism by contact with them. Nevertheless, it can be shown that their ideas did influence the new ruling class and later became a formative element of Hinduism.

First, it is important to emphasise that the *Dāsá*s were by no means materialists or atheists in any sense. Sometimes they are called *anyá-vrata*, 'having different ordinances' or performing alien rites;[13] and perhaps they are the enemies noted for their godless magic (*ádevī māyā́*).[14] Magic[15] is the direct opposite of prayer: "down sink the sorcerer ['having *māyā́*'], the prayerless ['not having *bráhman*'] Dasyu."[16] Magic is disreputable, and associated with false gods or scepticism about the gods: "if I worshipped false gods, or considered the gods useless… Let me die at once, if I am a sorcerer [*yātudhā́na*], or if I have burnt up a man's span of life. … The one who calls me a sorcerer, though I am not a sorcerer, or the one who says he is pure, though he is demonic [*rakṣás*] – let Indra strike him with his great weapon. Let him fall to the lowest depths under all creation."[17] In addition, the *Dāsá*s

---

[11] The word 'invasion' is highly suspect politically these days; something like migration (or infiltration or diffusion) would seem preferable to many. However, I consider it a matter of principle to totally exclude politics from scholarly thinking. I see war and heroism in the *Ṛg-Veda*, later an Aryan-speaking ruling class in North India. A mere coincidence?

Archaeologists do not find traces of this invasion – nor of an immigration: "far from being an invading race, the *Āryas* of the Rigveda were a locally emerging ethnic group of northwestern India" (Erdosy 1993: 46). But I think traces of ancient migrations and invasions are particularly difficult to find (Ratnagar 1999). If the Aryans did not learn their Indo-European language from imported grammar books, then they did come in; they did meet earlier inhabitants; and they did become the rulers. (Somewhat more exactly: the rulers identified themselves as Aryans, spoke Aryan languages and confessed to practice Aryan religion.)

For some time (again quite implausibly, considering the evidence of the texts) it was thought that the Aryans entered an almost empty country, perhaps half a millennium after the collapse of the Indus Valley Civilization. But now it seems that the Painted Grey Ware (PGW) culture, generally considered to be the product of (late) Vedic Aryans, is in some areas (central Haryana) not separated by any gap from Late Harappan remains; of the 98 known PGW sites here, 34 are on top of Late Harappan sites.

> [E]xcavations at Bhagwanpura… have demonstrated that no chronological gap separates them. … Thus, there is no 'Vedic night' (Fairservis 1975) separating the prehistoric/protohistoric from the early historic phases of South Asian culture history. (Shaffer–Lichtenstein 1999: 255).

For a good and up-to-date overview see McIntosh (2008: 91–101, 349–350, 399–400). I have tried to show elsewhere that from early Vedic up to Middle Indo-Aryan (Mahārāṣṭrī) a continuous phonetic influence of a Tamil-like language can be demonstrated (Ruzsa 2005), suggesting that Vedic Aryans were already in a fairly close contact with the major non-Aryan constituent of Indian culture; see Chapter III.

[12] See e.g. ṚV VIII.59[=70],11 or X.22,8. For a complete list see Hillebrandt (1999: II. 159–160).

[13] ṚV VIII.70,11; X.22,8; and at V.20,2 without specifying that *Dāsá*s or *Dásyu*s are meant.

[14] ṚV VII.1,10 and VII.98,5. At I.117,3c the dangerous magic of the *Dásyu* (*dásyor áśivasya māyā́*) is mentioned, while at VIII.14,14. appear "the *Dásyu*s, who wanted to creep up by magic and climb up to the sky" (*māyā́bhir utsísṛpsata[ḥ]… dyā́m ārúrukṣataḥ… dásyūm̐r*).

[15] By 'magic', I mean a technical manipulation of invisible supernatural *forces*, as opposed to sacrifice (or rather worship) that is a formal social behaviour towards invisible superhuman *beings*. The effect of magic is automatic; the consequences of the sacrifice depend on the will of the god.

For an overview of the role and value of magic in Vedic society see Oldenberg (1988: 251–270).

[16] ṚV IV.16,9d tr. Griffith (1973: 209). *ní māyā́vān ábrahmā dásyur arta* ||

[17] ṚV VII.104,14ab, 15ab and 16 tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 161).

14 *yádi vāhám ánṛtadeva ā́sa móghaṁ vā devā́m̐ apyūhé agne* | …
15 *adyā́ murīya yádi yātudhā́no ásmi yádi vā́yus tatápa pū́ruṣasya* | …

are not completely without gods – most scholars[18] would take the expression 'phallus-worshippers' (*śiśná-devāḥ*)[19] to refer to them.

That the "godless" Dāsás have their own religion is not that surprising. The expression *ádeva* should not be translated as godless, rather as having no *devá*s. *Devá*s are in the narrowest sense a group of Aryan deities, perhaps not even including the *ásuras*.[20] But even the widest meaning of the term never referred to all supernatural agencies; properly only the anthropomorphic, active "force of nature" gods can be called *devá*s, 'brilliant' or 'heavenly'. Therefore, the *Dásyus* were not irreligious at all. Their beliefs, as well as their rituals, fundamentally modified those of the conquerors. However, how can we add to the rather meagre evidence we could extract from the *R̥g-Veda* itself?

2. Further attempts at a reconstruction

(1) The most obvious way to reconstruct the non-Vedic source(s) of Indian religion is to deduce from the observable changes in the known beliefs and in the ritual. This may seem dangerously circular: we explain changes by supposing a source defined as the source of that change. The hypothesis will be in itself irrefutable and therefore meaningless. Nevertheless, if used with caution and compared with other information the method is valuable. Clearly not anything "new" (i.e. undocumented in the Vedas) should be considered of foreign origin; but if the new element is not only missing from, but completely alien to the Vedic hymns, or even stands in direct opposition to their ideals, we can safely assume an external source.

(2) Another method is to use archaeological evidence. It seems pretty certain that the *Dāsas* were the inheritors of the Indus Valley Civilisation. Whether they were the originators of that culture is not that clear, but also not so important for the present investigation. As already the first excavator, Sir

---

16 *yó mā́yātuṁ yā́tudhānéty ā́ha yó vā rakṣā́ḥ śúcir asmī́ty ā́ha |*
índras táṁ hantu mahatā́ vadhéna víśvasya jantór adhamás padīṣṭa ||

[18] See e.g. Keith (1925: I. 129); Allchin–Allchin (1968: 154).

[19] The word *śiśná-deva,* 'tail/phallus god' or 'having the phallus for god' (R̥V VII.21,5d. and X.99,3d) is translated by Grassmann in his dictionary (1873: 1396) as *Schwanzgötter, geschwänzte Dämonen,* but in his translation of the texts (1876–77: I. 320, II. 490) as *Buhlgötter* and *Unhold.* According to Griffith (1973: 345, 613) it means 'the lewd' and 'the lustful demons'. However, most modern interpreters agree that it means 'phallus-worshipper': e.g. Keith (1925: 129), Allchin–Allchin (1968: 154) and Geldner (1951–57).

The expression *mū́ra-deva*, 'having a root for god' is tacitly avoided by the translators (worshippers of idols or foolish gods etc.), while Keith (1925: 75) and Oldenberg (1988: 175) take it literally as referring to some vegetation divinities. All the three occurrences of *mū́ra-deva* (VII.104,24c; X.87,2c and 14c) qualify sorcerers (*yātudhā́na*). In the second hymn (X.87.), line 10d adds, "split the root of the sorcerer in three" (*tredhā́ mū́laṁ yātudhā́nasya vr̥śca*), while 19c says of sorcerers and demonic beings (*rákṣas*es), "burn up these carrion-eaters with their roots" (*ánu daha sahámūrān kravyā́do*). As usually not even carrion-eating demons have roots, it is clear that their gods or idols are meant – and "root" seems to be a reasonably plastic description of a vertically erected stone phallus or lingam.

The last occurrence of 'root' in the R̥V (III.30,17a) could be metaphorical: "pull out the *rákṣas* together with its root" (*úd vr̥ha rákṣaḥ sahámūlam*), but it is not very probable. From lines 15c and 17d, we learn that these *rákṣas*es are mortal, hate prayer and have evil magic (*mártya, brahma-dvíṣ,* and *dur-māyú*), so they fit the above picture perfectly.

It cannot be ruled out that Mūra was simply the name of the idol, perhaps a form of the Tamil national god Murukan. In the MBh Mura is a demon killed by Kr̥ṣṇa, once (VII.10.5) called Muru.

[20] The *ásura*s seem to be an ancient, moral group of deities, guardians of order and possessors of magic power (*māyā́*); many of them were also called *ādityá*s (Hale 1986: 2, 31–37). Beyond the well recognised difference between *devá*s and *ásura*s, Oberlies speaks of *three* religions (!) of the Vedic people: "Die 'Āditya-', die 'Indra-' und die 'Agni-Religion'" (Oberlies 1998: 345–347).

John Marshall, demonstrated,[21] there were significant motifs in the Indus Culture that could not be found in the Vedas but reappeared much later in Hinduism.

(3) The last approach may seem rather antiquated and hopelessly shaky. Still it cannot be neglected. It consists of pure aprioristic speculation aided by a little comparativism: under the given situation, what kind of beliefs the people *must have held*? And what do we find with peoples living in a similar way? Though speculation cannot be considered as data, it helps in understanding the historical processes involved and in explaining at least some of the urges for change. (Also, it seems that most historians of ideas have their own speculative background, theoretical approach, interpretative model, set of preconceptions or whatever – then we may as well try to make these explicit rather than trying to hide them.)

If all three sources provide converging results that fit within the textual evidence of the Vedas we will at least have a working hypothesis. In what follows, I will try to show that it is so; and that starting from this hypothesis we can suggest a very basic motive for developing the concept of Brahman, the impersonal world-soul.

(1) Starting with the surprising religious developments, the most conspicuous is the appearance of the new gods (Śiva, Kr̥ṣṇa, Rāma, Durgā[22]). They do not belong to the *deva*s. They are infinitely more powerful and have a practically monotheistic character. The older *deva*s are almost totally forgotten: their role can be compared to that played by the Greek gods in Renaissance and Baroque art.

The older ritual, the *yajña* offering has been replaced by *pūjā*[23] worship. It was, in fact, a two-step process: first, the *yajña* changed its meaning completely and only later went into oblivion. Originally, it was an offering: a call to the gods, an invitation for them to come and partake of the food and drink. It was an effort to win their friendship or at least temporary goodwill, so that they would grant the fulfilment of their host's requests. Later, in the age of the *Brāhmaṇa*s, it developed into a very complex magic, a purely mechanical technique, a manipulation of hidden forces, in which intentions – including the will of the gods – played no part. The gods were regarded as symbolic entities only.[24] It is extremely strange, perhaps unparalleled in the history of religions, that in spite of this radical change of function and interpretation the same ancient hymns of the *R̥g-Veda* continued to be used – no longer as invocations but rather as spells. In fact it was the perceived magical effect of their sound that lead to the exact preservation of these 3000 year old texts in a purely (and later mostly) oral tradition.

Though the later *pūjā* can be performed in a purely adorational spirit (partly under the influence of the devotional *bhakti* movement, partly in response to the challenges of Islam and Christianity), it has been shown that it originates from agricultural magic.[25] The essential ingredients offered at a *pūjā*

---

[21] See Allchin–Allchin (1968: 311–12).

[22] Even their names suggest their non-Aryan origin. Kr̥ṣṇa and Rāma, as well as Kālī (another name of Durgā) means simply 'black' (and in iconography, they appear in strange – blue and green –, usually dark colours). The name Śiva is normally understood as euphemism (meaning 'benevolent') for the dangerous god Rudra, 'the Howler'; but it is equally possible to take Rudra to mean 'red', and that could be a rendering of the Tamil name of the god, Civa-, 'red / angry' (DEDR 1931). Scansion shows that in the R̥V *rudra* was trisyllabic, i.e. *rudira* or *rudhira* ('red' or 'blood'). See Hillebrandt (1999: II. 280), Chakravarti (1994: 28), Walker (1968: II. 406). The transition from *rudhira* to *rudra* is made easy by the fact that their old Dravidian pronunciation was the same: Rudra in Tamil is *(u)ruttira.*

[23] This name again appears to be Dravidian: Tamil *pūcu* 'besmear, anoint' (DEDR 4352); see Bühnemann (1988: 30). Alternatively, it might come from Tamil *pū* 'flower, menstruation' (DEDR 4345) + *cey* 'act' (DEDR 1957); see Walker (1968: II. 252).

[24] Keith (1925: I. 257–264, II. 379–401). A surprising outcome of this tendency is that the standard exegetical and philosophical interpretation of the ritual, i.e. the *Mīmāṁsā* school is proudly atheistic; see Keith (1921: 61–64, 74).

[25] Chattopadhyaya (1959: 294–96).

are fruits, flowers, leaves, water (in many forms), incense and red powder or paste (symbol of female fertility). Although it is normally done in worship of a god, it is still definitely magical: the idol itself (unknown in the Vedas) is not a symbol only of the divinity, but the god actually enters the *mūrti* (through the *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā*, 'establishment of life' ritual).[26]

The concept of sexuality in various aspects now totally pervades Hinduism. It is present in Kṛṣṇa's amorous sports with the shepherdesses, in the Śaiva phallus-worship, in the cult of the *yoni* as a symbol of female creative energy, in the appearance of the fearful mother-goddess (Kālī or Durgā), in the Tantric orgies (actual or symbolic) and in the concept of the world-process as the union of the cosmic male and female principles.

The fate of man is now a beginningless cycle of transmigrations, with the mechanical (therefore impartial and just) system of karmic retributions. As a corollary, the highest aim of man is *mokṣa*, salvation, leaving this cycle and this world for ever. One – perhaps the most important – way to this goal is Yoga, a rather specific technique of self-sanctification. Karma and rebirth motivate *ahiṁsā*, non-injury. Ideally, this includes vegetarianism – whereas the Vedic Aryan prized meat above any other food, especially beef (by now an absolute taboo). A bull was also the best sacrifice for his *deva*s.

It is clear that viewed through Vedic eyes, the modern Hindu is (like a Dāsa) *ayajyu, adeva* and *anya-vrata*: not offering (but using magic), not worshipping the *devas* (adoring instead the phallus), and performing different rites.

(2) The material from archaeological finds is most interesting. Though the Harappan script remains undeciphered, it is possible to interpret the material to an extent. Even the sceptical observer can notice[27] the mother-goddess cult: a very great number of clay figurines of women suggest their widespread use in household shrines,[28] and the notable sealing showing a female from whose womb a plant issues can be explained as representing Mother Earth giving birth to vegetation.[29] This can be connected to one form of Durgā, Śākaṁ-Bharī, i.e. 'bearing vegetables'.[30] The holy fig tree was already sacred and seems to have been related to the goddess. Priestly figures on the seals often seem to be female.

The famous proto-Śiva, appearing on several seals, has three faces[31] and a horned headdress; he is sitting on a throne in a yoga-position, surrounded by animals worshipping him. His being also a fertility-god is shown by his ithyphallic character. Later Hindu Śiva has four faces towards the four directions (of which only three are visible at a time);[32] he has no horns, but has the crescent moon on

---

[26] Bühnemann (1988: 52–54, 191–195).

[27] This is an overstatement. Some cannot or will not. "The ideology… is striking in the general absence of the pantheism associated with agricultural-village oriented societies. … Instead, the religious attributes are strongly suggestive of a pastoral ideology." Fairservis (1997: 63).

[28] "[M]other goddess figurines… were ubiquitous in all… centres of the Indus civilisation", except for Kalibangan. Kulke–Rothermund (1998: 24). "[P]resque chaque maison en possédait un exemplaire, qui avait dû être placé dans une niche, le dos au mur". Sergent (1997: 109).

[29] Piggott (1950: 201).

[30] *Devī-Māhātmya* 92.43–44 (= *Mārkandeya-Purāṇa* 91.45–46ab), quoted and analysed by Chattopadhyaya (1959: 293). The cult of Śākam-Bharī appears already in the *Mahā-Bhārata* (MBh III.82.11–15).

[31] Perhaps such an image was seen by the *ṛṣi* of ṚV X.99.6ab: "He, the Lord of the house subdued the six-eyed, three-headed Dāsá roaring powerfully." *sá íd dā́saṁ tuvīrávam pátir dán ṣaḷakṣáṁ triśīrṣā́ṇaṁ damanyat* |

[32] The *Mahā-Bhārata* (MBh I.203.20–26) relates the origin of his four faces in the legend of the beautiful maiden Tilottamā; see Mani (1975: 789).

his head;[33] he is the great yogi (*mahā-yogin*) and lord of animals (*paśu-pati*). He is frequently described and shown with an erect phallus, especially by the Pāśupata-Lakulīśa sect.[34]

The phallus (and possibly the female organ, in the form of stone rings of different sizes) was also object of separate worship. The bull[35] seems to have been already sacred, though of course it cannot be shown if it was already taboo or not.

3. Typological speculation

(3) The speculative model[36] starts from the assumption that peoples' beliefs are closely related to their way of life: the social organisation and the mode of production.[37] We know that the Aryans were nomadic herdsmen, while the prehistoric peoples they found in India typically relied on agriculture. Let us consider the possible effects of this difference on their respective religions.

As human infants need the milk and care of their mothers for several years, prehistoric women could survive only by gathering roots, fruits and seeds, while men did the hunting. Therefore cattle breeding could easily be an invention of men, agriculture that of women.[38]

a) On the grasslands, a nomadic tribe can live prosperously on the milk and meat of the cattle, using wool for clothing. Shepherds or cowherds will be men only. They do the "important" work and they own the cattle. They want their offspring to inherit their property; therefore, a patrilineal lineage will be established – resulting in a strong patriarchal society with subordinate, insignificant women.

When the nomadic man looks at the world, he sees in it forces similar in character to himself. He will find there strong, lonely, impulsive and aggressive males (sometimes in small gangs): they are dangerous like fire on the steppes or the summer hail, but they can be friendly as the sun in spring or the campfire. Most of them will be divinities of the sky: Sun, Storm, Rain, and Wind. If they have a father, probably it will be the Sky; if they have a king, it will be the one with the strongest weapon, the thunderbolt. When there are goddesses, they are mostly wives only. If the warrior hero has prospects of an after-life, it might be in the company of the gods and fathers, perhaps in heaven.

This is the homely polytheism of the Greeks, Germans, Celts and the Vedic Aryans. It is apt to develop a detailed mythology with lots of adventures, especially wars and robberies. The appropriate ritual is offering meat and wine into the fire, which takes the food up into the sky. Its main objective is to win the friendship of the dangerous ones so that they will not harm the worshipper.

b) Where agriculture develops on some fertile land, it will be a far more reliable basis of existence than hunting. As long as it remains in the hands of the discoverer women, it will make them the ruling

[33] India being close to the Equator the crescent Moon appears almost horizontal and so recalls the shape of a boat or a bull's horns.

[34] Walker (1968: II. 194), Chakravarti (1994: 124–142, 164–169).

[35] In modern Hinduism besides the sacred cow/bull, the bull Nandin is Śiva's *vāhana* ('mount', emblematic animal).

[36] I follow loosely Chattopadhyaya (1959). A more recent account can be found in Bhattacharyya (1977), see especially pp. 1–34 and 253–277.

[37] This Marxist term, *mode of production,* covers the most general features of the way a society produces goods, distributes labour and the goods produced.

[38] Our hypothesis starts here, in the Neolithic. However, ideas of a religious character are immensely older, as archaeology amply proves. Specifically the Great Goddess was widely worshipped in the Palaeolithic (Gimbutas 1989: 316). Therefore, the actual beliefs of the peoples we are trying to understand have already a very long and complex history and we must not expect to find anywhere the "pure", abstract notional schemes outlined below.

sex. They will do everything really important: work for food and give birth to the new generations of the tribe. A mother knows who her daughters are and therefore has no need for any strict form of marriage. In this strong version of matriarchy love may remain what it should be, having no economical consequences or social constraints.

A woman in this society will look at herself and the world as embodiments of the same wonder – fertility. Mother Earth gives birth to the plants and thus supports daily life; women give birth to children and thus sustain the life of the tribe. Fertility is the only force we are concerned with, and it is markedly periodical. Besides the daily cycle of light and darkness (being active and inert in sleep), there is the monthly cycle of the Moon and the woman. The Moon gets round (as if pregnant) and bright, then disappears in darkness. A woman's menstrual blood is a sign of her fertility as well as a symbol of childbirth and also of (violent) death. The yearly cycle of darkness/cold and light/heat is also the life cycle of the crop. It also approximates the time needed for humans and larger animals to bear offspring. The longest cycle seen is that of life; and there will be great hope of a new start after death, especially if the corpse is deposited into the womb of Mother Earth (possibly in the position of an embryo) – as it happens also with the seed. As the origin of the idea of rebirth is to be found here, also the speculations about larger cycles (world-ages) is also a natural extension of this all-important phenomenon.

As the essence of the whole view is the analogy of the fertility of women and of Nature, the ritual appropriate here is sympathetic magic.[39] In fact sowing itself is a purely magical act. The seed is "shown" to the earth or rather put into contact with it, hoping that as a result fertile Earth will produce similar seeds. In addition, there is no one to pray to. Fertility is an abstract idea. Even Mother Earth is not very personal. She is clearly female, but she does not resemble a human – she is too close, visible and tangible (and too big, in fact universal) to be anthropomorphic. The fitting symbols of fertility that can be used in this magic are woman (real women or even rather abstract figurines typically of clay, i.e. earth), blood (or its colour, red), earth and plants.[40] It is only appropriate that the ritual itself is in the hands of women, and the specialists (healers, priestesses, midwifes) will also be females.[41]

This view of the world has certain accidental advantages. Philosophically its monism gives a unified picture of the world. The abstract goddess that has only symbols, not images in the strict sense, is more adaptable to later needs. Its magic is not yet very different from real technique and so not at all opposed to science: rather a source of it. (The will of gods can be incalculable, but the secret laws of Nature can be investigated. The strong sense of causality may also be the source of the idea of *karman*.) In addition, psychologically it seems quite apt. Mother as the source of personal life; woman's womb as the dark place of birth, death and sexual joy seem to be eternal motifs of our character.

---

[39] Magic based on the idea that different sorts of relations (similarity, contact, analogy, affinity, being a part of) express fundamental laws of the world. Manipulating one of the related entities, the effect will show on the other as well. Another type, the use of magical spells, starts from the assumption of an essential relation between the ("real") name and its reference.

[40] Many more could be added. Representations of the vulva – in its most abstract, but almost universally known form it is a triangle pointing downwards, sometimes with a dot (embryo or semen) in the middle. An egg or an egg / womb shaped object, e.g. a great nut. Holes and caves. Water, another obvious condition of survival and fertility (fertile earth as well as the female organ is damp). Also trees and snakes – both for their yearly renewal; but on account of their form they are able to represent masculine fertility as well. A very detailed treatment of the ancient European material can be found in Gimbutas (1989, see especially pp. 141–159, 316–321).

[41] Later, strongly patriarchal religions will be inclined to consider them witches, wielders of black magic, and purify them in the sacrificial fire of their heavenly gods.

c) Of course, men will not like the insignificant position they logically have in such a society. If they can, they will return to the centre. When they learn to use animals (their property) in ploughing, they will gain the upper hand. They will emphasize the role of the seed: woman or earth is only the material, the seed giving the form is the important thing. Without sowing, without the father, there is no reaping, no offspring. The proper child, a son, resembles the father as the crop resembles the seed sown. On the cosmic scale, Mother Earth needs Father Sky to fertilize her with rain. His symbols are the phallus (of course: men are so proud of it) and the bull (not only a strong and fertile animal, but also the puller of the plough). The ritual that fits the picture is a real or simulated union of male and female, and the world will be seen as a cosmic sexual act. This is what we find in Tantrism, but traces of this view can be distinctly shown already in the *Brāhmaṇas*.[42] Anthropomorphism is more developed here, especially when the connection of the Great Mother to the earth slackens – then the Goddess will be considered first of all the wife of the far-away Lord.

Another version may be thought of as relatively archaic, on account of its transitional character. Here the maternal-material principle is still the prominent, active factor and quite autonomous. However, she is already considered subordinate to the passive male-spiritual entity whose interest and intentions she serves. This sort of Sāṁkhya-type dualism may have originally been appealing especially for the non-working, male ruling class or intelligentsia.

From the point of view of agriculture only, the Indus Civilisation appears to be remarkably archaic. It exploited the yearly flooding of the Indus, and no animals were necessary in agriculture.[43] So quite possibly, it was still mainly the sphere of women. Therefore, we could expect the Great Goddess to be very much in the foreground. However, animal husbandry was also very important, and it had been so for the past four millennia. In the society of the cities, men were quite probably the political rulers.[44]

As our results do converge, we will assume that the religion of the Dāsas was of the fertility-type. Perhaps the Aryans first met more frequently with the relatively pure Mother Earth-only form: the godless people following alien rites. Later they also noticed the dualist form predominant among the higher strata of society "whose god is the phallus" (we find only scanty references to them in the *Ṛg-Veda*).

4. Meeting of Ārya and Dasyu

The reaction of the Aryans to the fertility-religion of the subdued population was first a general rejection, which is what we see most often in the *Ṛg-Veda*. However, with time they themselves became settled and progressively dependent on agriculture instead of cattle breeding only.[45] In

---

[42] Keith (1925: II. 345, 351–352, 476–477).

[43] "In modern practice such land is neither ploughed nor manured, nor does it require additional water." Allchin–Allchin (1968: 260). However, the plough was already known; the oldest known ploughed field dated to ca. 2800 BCE was excavated at Kalibangan. In addition, terra-cotta model ploughs were found; their originals were most probably made of wood and must have decayed without a trace. Singh (2009: 157) and McIntosh (2008: 121–122).

[44] The famous "priest-king" sculpture has no female counterpart; the male god (proto-Śiva) is enthroned, while the goddess is not; the frequently depicted powerful animals are mostly emphatically male (the bull and the bovine "unicorn" is always so).

[45] Vedic peoples did practise agriculture (e.g. they knew the plough and the sickle), but it was secondary and not highly valued for a long time. Rau (1997: 205).

response, they had more need for agricultural magic[46] and less need for their most warlike gods. This accounts for many features of the development of Indian religion, some of which were mentioned above; but we are now focusing on the origins of philosophy.

Some late Vedic seers must have perceived the greater explanatory strength of the single, unifying, all-encompassing creative principle, and they tried to import it. Coming from a strongly patriarchal society, they abhorred the femaleness of the Fundamental, so they tried to change it into a male.[47] This might be the origin of the Jaina image of the world as a cosmic man.[48] Interestingly enough it is sometimes still conceived of as female.[49]

The same change of sex happened[50] in the famous hymn about the cosmic Man, the *Puruṣa-Sūkta*: "It is the Man [*púruṣa*] who is all this, whatever has been and whatever is to be."[51] Through sacrificing this gigantic person "born at the beginning",[52] all the components of the ordered cosmos originate(d), including social order.

It is noteworthy that in this hymn there are also other signs of adaptation to the "aboriginals". Besides the much emphasized derivation of the four classes (*varṇas*),[53] it is clear that here the sacrifice is already magic and not an offering.[54] The *devá*s perform it with the cosmic Man, so there is no one to offer it to;[55] and in fact, they themselves are born in consequence of the sacrifice. The cyclicity of the fertility-cult is manifest at other places as well: the year is referred to,[56] and the perplexing "from the daughter the father was born"-idea is put forward.[57]

---

[46] As the Dāsas became integrated into Aryan society, these rites were no longer practised by *hostile* peoples. Perhaps they were still not quite respectable in Aryan eyes, but a class fundamental for the survival of the whole community.

[47] Oberlies (1998: 380) suggests that the concept of an androgynous primeval being was also formed, but his Vedic examples are far from convincing. "Dies[e Welt] fürwahr ist [das Werk] dessen, der Stier und Kuh [zugleich] ist" seems an over-interpretation. *Tád ín nv àsya vṛṣabhásya dhenór ā́ nā́mabhir mamire sákmyaṁ góḥ* | (R̥V III.38,7ab) is indeed somewhat obscure; Griffith (1973: 183) translates it as "That same companionship of her, the Milch-cow, here with the strong Bull's divers forms they established". It could also mean that "they [the *gandharvas*] formed with names that nature (*sákmya*) of the cow, of the milch cow of this bull."

[48] Zimmer (1951: 241–248). Jainism is an ancient, non-Vedic religion. Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, who is frequently presented in handbooks as its founder was in all probability a contemporary of the Buddha (late 5th century BCE); but he was only an important saint (*tīrthaṁ-kara*) and reformer of a religion already well-established in East India.

[49] Zimmer (1951: 259).

[50] Some will object that the central idea of the hymn – the origin of the world from the parts of a primeval giant – is not new in the age discussed but inherited from Indo-European times, as the same is found in the story of the ice-giant Ymir in the Old Norse (Icelandic) Edda. This has been excellently presented with plenty of comparative material from other Indo-European sources by Lincoln (1986). Therefore, I have tried to show (Ruzsa 2006; Chapter II) that in spite of the very convincing appearance of the arguments they are inconclusive. The mythologem is found in other cultures as well and the primeval being is normally female as in the earliest recorded variant of the myth from Mesopotamia (the creation of heaven and earth from the two halves of the sea-monster Ti'āmat). On the other hand, the idea does *not* appear in the earliest recorded Indo-European cosmogonies. In India, we find it only in the latest stratum of the *R̥g-Veda*. Therefore, if the *Puruṣa*-myth is not an independent, local development, it could be an (indirect) borrowing from e.g. Mesopotamia.

[51] R̥V X.90,2ab. tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 30). *púruṣa evédáṁ sárvaṁ yád bhūtáṁ yác ca bhávyam* |

[52] R̥V X.90,7b. tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 30); *jātám agratáḥ*.

[53] Of which the lowest, the feet of the society-Man, the *Śūdra* class is definitely non-Aryan, and remains excluded from Vedic ritual up to the present day.

[54] Perhaps it is not purely accidental that this Vedic hymn is still widely used in *pūjā* ritual (Bühnemann 1988: 68).

[55] Delighting in the paradox (quite appropriate to the transcendent): "With the sacrifice the gods sacrificed to the sacrifice." (R̥V X.90,16a. tr. O'Flaherty 1981: 30; *yajñéna yajñám ayajanta devā́s*).

[56] "When the gods spread the sacrifice with the Man as the offering, spring was the clarified butter, summer the fuel, autumn the oblation." R̥V X.90,6. tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 30).

Perhaps the same trend with progressive personification is visible in the later gods *Prajā-pati*, Lord of Offspring and *Pitā-maha*, Great Father.

This effort, however, is fundamentally flawed. The high explanatory power of the Great Mother lies precisely in her being a female. By converting her into a Man, either the image becomes ridiculously incoherent or most of its force gets lost.[58] However, there is another, more difficult but fruitful way of solving the gender conflict, that of further abstraction: neither male nor female, an abstract principle of fertility or creation, the neuter and impersonal One.

5. The break with anthropomorphism

This is, in fact, what we find in the beautiful Hymn of Creation, the *Nāsadīya-Sūkta* (X. 129). That One (*tád ékam*) coming into being (*ābhú*) was neither existent nor non-existent (*nā́sad āsīn nó sád āsīt*); it was darkness hidden by darkness (*táma āsīt támasā gūḷhám*), undistinguished water (*apraketáṁ salilám*) covered by void (*tuchyám*) – all carefully selected words of the neuter gender. However, it is not the result of modern philosophical speculation; it is most closely tied up with the ancient fertility view. It is clearly alive: "That one breathed, windless, by its own energy";[59] "that One arose through the power of heat."[60] It was born (*ajāyata*), desire (*kā́ma*) came upon it, and that was the first seed (*rétas*) of mind.

In addition, the dual-copulative vision of the world is detectable: "Was there below? Was there above? There were seed-placers; there were powers. There was energy beneath, there was impulse above."[61] The impulsive seed-placer above is an echo of the Sky-father; the power (*mahimán*, 'greatness') or energy (*svadhā́*, 'internal inclination') below is the maternal fertility of the Earth. Notably these two feminine fertility-expressions were already applied to the original neutral one (in verses 2 and 3). Therefore, this abstract entity here shows clear traces not only of being generally connected to the fertility-view, but also especially of having been developed out of the feminine principle. The Aryan gods are insignificant compared to this One: "The gods came afterwards, with the creation of this universe."[62]

In the famous sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, where Uddālaka Āruṇi teaches his son Śvetaketu the last truths, the Absolute is called Existent (*sat*) and One (*eka*). That this is a material, fertile principle is shown by heat, water and food being born from it (both the masculine √*sṛj*, 'emit'

---

yát púruṣeṇa haviṣā devā́ yajñám átanvata |
vasantó asyāsīd ā́jyaṁ grīṣmá idhmáḥ śarád dhavíḥ ||

[57] *tásmād virā́ḷ ajāyata virā́jo ádhi pū́ruṣaḥ* | "From him Virāj was born, and from Virāj came the Man." ṚV X.90,5ab. tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 30). – The gender of *Virā́j*, 'sovereign' is indeterminate. In the use of the word *ajāyata*, 'was born' the femineity (and especially the parthenogenetic power) of both principles is shown.

[58] When the idea is later coupled with fully developed monotheism, we get another powerful religious image, pantheism, which remains important in Hinduism to the present day. The classical text is Canto 11 of the *Bhagavad-Gītā.*

[59] ṚV X.129,2c tr. after Macdonell (1917: 208–210). *ā́nīd avātáṁ svadháyā tád ékaṁ.*

[60] ṚV X.129,3d tr. Macdonell (1917: 209). *tápasas tán mahinā́jāyataíkam ||*

[61] ṚV X.129,5bcd tr. combined from Macdonell (1917: 210) and O'Flaherty (1981: 25).

...adháḥ svid āsī́3d upári svid āsī3t |
retodhā́ āsan mahimā́na āsan svadhā́ avástāt práyatiḥ parástāt ||

(In the printed text, the first *āsī́3t* is without an accent (*āsī3d*) and the second *āsan* appears as *āsant*. Here I follow Macdonell 1917: 210).

[62] ṚV X.129,6c tr. O'Flaherty (1981: 25). *arvā́g devā́ asyá visárjanena.*

and the feminine √jan 'be born' are used). These three forms (*rūpa*s) together constitute everything in the world. They are rather alive: they determine the different ways of reproduction (from an egg, from a living being, from a sprout); and in man, they form flesh, blood and marrow, etc. They are also connected to the cyclicity of nature: they represent the hot, the rainy and the harvest-season, i.e. – taken together – the Indian year.[63]

The world is a modification (*vikāra*) of this One substrate, not an illusion. (That interpretation, initiated by Śaṅkara a thousand years later, is based on a misunderstanding. The famous *vācârambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāma-dheyam* does not mean, "the modification [is] only a name arising from speech",[64] rather that "speech grasps first the modification and uses this as name."[65]) The Existent is alive; or rather, it is life itself pervading all living beings. The simile, tellingly, is a tree, in which the life-sap pervades all branches. In the other agricultural illustration, that of the fig tree, the emphasis is on the masculine seed-aspect. It is the invisible essence of the small seed that determines the structure of the gigantic tree.

Here we find a more conscious effort at overcoming the duality of the fertility-concept[66] and incorporating both its aspects, the material and the formal/spiritual into the One neuter principle that is called in other *Upaniṣad*s the Brahman. This name itself shows the origin of the concept in the magical word-view. In the age of the *Brāhmaṇa*s, *bráhman* no longer means 'prayer' but *mantra*, i.e. magical spell, and also the power of the sacrifice[67] (i.e. magical force). Further the term *upaniṣad* (and also *upâsanā*, 'meditative worship', so frequent in the *Upaniṣad*s) originally denotes a fundamentally magical concept, homologization: connecting two items, one on the cosmic/divine, one on the personal/human plane.[68] In fact "the central teaching of the *Upaniṣad*s", the identity of Brahman and *ātman* is nothing but a full homologization of the cosmic and individual essence.

6. Conclusion

In what has been said above, I have added many details, some of which may seem more probable than others, and some of which may need revision in the future. Therefore, it is perhaps not out of place here to re-state the central tenet of this study that may still be accepted in spite of disagreement over many minor points of interpretation and analysis.

The origin of the abstract and universal philosophical concept of *Brahman* is not a linear internal development of the Vedic *Weltanschauung*: its roots are to be found in the deanthropomorphising of the (essentially non-Vedic) Earth Goddess. The motive for this change might have been the alienness of the fertility-cult and its image of the dominating Great Mother to the patriarchal Aryans.

This analysis also shows that a millennium later Tantrism, using overtly sexual imagery, far from being an innovation is but a re-assertion of very archaic features of Indian culture – features that influenced both the *Upaniṣad*s and Sāṁkhya philosophy. Therefore, it is easier to understand why so many of their seemingly incompatible ideas and also their terminology live on in the sectarian *Tantra*s.

---

[63] van Buitenen (1957: 91-92).

[64] Radhakrishnan (1953: 446–447).

[65] A detailed argument can be found in Ruzsa 2004, here Chapter IV.

[66] "There was only the existent, single, *without a second*" (*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.2.1: *sad eva… āsīd, ekam evâdvitīyam*), i.e. it had no mate.

[67] Already in the *Ṛg-Veda*, see Grassmann (1873: 916).

[68] Olivelle (1998: 24).

It is perhaps worthy of remark that in ancient Greece a similar process may have lead to the birth of philosophical thought. Indo-Europeans with a religion very similar to that of the Aryans conquered a people where the cult of the Great Goddess was still very much alive, and the interaction of the two religions is well documented in the historical records.[69] Is it possible that we found a key to the question: why is philosophy not present in most civilizations? Maybe because they did not have to face a similar conflict of these two basic types of religious understanding of the world?

[69] Gimbutas (1989: 318).

II. The Cosmic Giant – an Indo-European myth?

An essay in experimental mythology

1. Pantheism and homologies

The *Puruṣa-Sūkta* (‘Hymn of the Man’) is an important text in its own right but it deserves our attention perhaps even more for the role it plays in the development of some central ideas of Hinduism.

It is best known for the derivation of social hierarchy, i.e. the *varṇa*-system: the priest was formed from the face of the primeval giant Puruṣa (‘man’), the warrior from the arms, the commoner from the thighs and the lowest, non-Aryan *śūdra* from the feet.[1]

It is an important witness of the changing concept of the ritual: the great sacrifice described in the hymn seems to be effective automatically (as it is characteristic of magic) rather than through securing the cooperation of some higher power.[2] This understanding of the ritual dominates in the *Brāhmaṇa*s while the earlier Rigvedic hymns simply pray for the help and benevolence of a god.

A number of extremely important philosophical and religious ideas appear in this hymn. Although mentioned only cursorily, the idea of a cyclic universe seems to be expressed. There is no absolute

---

1 ṚV X.90,11–12:

yát púruṣaṁ vy ádadhuḥ katidhā́ vy àkalpayan
múkhaṁ kím asya kaú bāhū́ kā́ ūrū́ pā́dā ucyete ||
brāhmaṇò 'sya múkham āsīd bāhū́ rājanyàḥ kr̥táḥ |
ūrū́ tád asya yád vaíśyaḥ padbhyā́ṁ śūdró ajāyata ||

In R.C. Zaehner’s translation (Goodall 1996: 13–15):

When they divided [primal] Man,
Into how many parts did they divide him?
What was his mouth? What his arms?
What are his thighs called? What his feet?

The Brāhman was his moth,
The arms were made the Prince,
His thighs the common people,
And from his feet the serf was born.

2 ṚV X.90,16a: *yajñéna yajñám ayajanta devā́s.* “With the sacrifice the gods / Made sacrifice to sacrifice.” (Zaehner tr.)

beginning and end to the cosmic process, every death is followed by a new birth; the incipient idea of eternal return is suggested by the metaphor of the son (or daughter?) giving birth to his parent.[3]

Pantheism, the understanding of the universe as somehow identical to God or his body is central to Hindu thinking. The *locus classicus* is Arjuna's cosmic vision of Kr̥ṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (Canto 11), but we find it unmistakably already in the *Puruṣa-Sūkta:* our world is a fourth of Puruṣa, and three quarters of him are in heaven.[4] A fundamental consequence of this view penetrating all higher Indian ethics is the recognition of God (or at least his presence) in all living beings, and it appears first here: the thousand heads, eyes and feet of Puruṣa are but our heads and eyes.[5]

A related concept that also was to have a brilliant future is the homologization of man and cosmos. If the world is God, then the sun may be his eye, the wind his breath etc. Therefore, the different parts of humans (eye, breath, blood, flesh, hairs) are seen as closely connected to one or another element of the world (sun, wind, water, earth, plants). Such connections are often made in the *Upaniṣad*s, and in fact the central thought there and also in the Vedānta philosophy is the identity of *ātman* and Brahman, the human self and the essence of the cosmos. And this identification is but the most abstract form of the microcosm/macrocosm homologization.

It is not only its content that shows the importance of this text. It is very popular even today[6] and must have been so from the very beginning. It has an important place in the ritual (the *agnicayana* and the *puruṣamedha*),[7] it can be found in all the four Vedic *Saṁhitā*s[8] and it has attracted innumerable commentaries and reflections.[9]

2. Lincoln's thesis and further Indian data

In the light of the above, it seems unnecessary to emphasize the relevance of the question: when and where did these ideas originate? The text itself cannot be very old; it may be the latest in the *R̥g-Veda.* This is shown (besides the appearance of the many "modern" features above) by the language and the meter – both fairly close to classical Sanskrit –, and the mentioning of the names of the three Vedas.

This, however, does not imply that all these concepts would be innovations. Some of them may come from "outside", and be there quite old; or some of these ideas may be ancient in the Aryan tradition itself.

As for the latter, it has long been noticed that the cosmogony in the *Puruṣa-Sūkta* resembles quite closely that in the Icelandic *Edda*. There the world is formed from parts of the primeval ice-giant Ymir. Starting from this observation Bruce Lincoln (1986) collected lots of relevant material and tried

---

3 R̥V X.90,5ab: *tásmād virā́ḷ ajāyata virā́jo ádhi pū́ruṣaḥ* | "From him was Virāj born, / From Virāj Man again." (Zaehner tr.)

4 R̥V X.90,1cd and 3d: *sá bhū́miṁ viśváto vr̥tvā́ty atiṣṭhad daśāṅgulám || ... tripā́d asyāmŕ̥taṁ diví* || "Encompassing the earth on every side, / He exceeded it by ten fingers' [breadth]… Three-quarters are the immortal in heaven." (Zaehner tr.)

5 R̥V X.90,1ab, 2ab and 3c: *sahásraśīrṣā púruṣaḥ sahasrākṣáḥ sahásrapāt |... púruṣa evédáṁ sárvaṁ yád bhūtáṁ yác ca bhávyam |... pā́do 'sya víśvā bhūtā́ni* || "A thousand heads had [primal] Man, / A thousand eyes, a thousand feet… [That] Man is this whole universe, – / What was and what is yet to be… All beings form a quarter of him." (Zaehner tr.)

6 It is the text structuring the typical modern *pūjā* ritual (Bühnemann 1988: 68).

7 Staal (1983: I. 415); *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* XIII.6.2,12

8 R̥V X.90; *Sāmaveda-Saṁhitā* 617–621; *Vājasaneyi-Saṁhitā* 31.1–16; *Atharvaveda-Saṁhitā* XIX.6,1–15.

9 Avasthī (1994); see *Puruṣasūktabhāṣyasaṅgrahaḥ*.

to show that both this pantheistic cosmogony and the related microcosm/macrocosm homologizations are parts of the Indo-European heritage.

From the various more or less cosmological accounts and other texts showing human/cosmos analogies in Indo-European languages the following original correspondences seem to appear as fairly stable: flesh–earth, bone–stone, hairs–vegetation, bodily fluids–waters, breath–wind, eye–sun, and perhaps also skull–sky. [10]

The issue is of vast importance. Beyond fundamentally influencing our understanding of the early development of Indian philosophy, this would also be the almost only clear example proving a

[10] I reproduce here Lincoln's findings as summarized in his Table 3 (1986: 21), with minor corrections, additions and some rearrangement. (Entries in italics in the table appear coupled with the microcosmic alloform italicised in the header.)

Text	Microcosmic alloforms								
	Flesh/ *body*	**Bone**	**Hair**	**Blood/ *bodily fluids***	**Breath/ *spirit***	**Eyes/ *face***	**Head**	**Mind/ *heart, breast***	**Brain/ *thought***
	Macrocosmic alloforms								
Puruṣa-Sūkta	—	—	—	—	wind	sun	heaven	moon	—
Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa 2.6	*earth*	—	—	—	wind	sun	—	—	—
Aitareya-Upaniṣad 1.4	—	—	plants	*water*	wind	sun	—	moon	—
Edda (Ymir)	earth	mount	trees	sea	—	—	heaven	—	cloud
Russian (Dove King)	*earth*	stone	—	—	*wind*	dawn/ *sun*	—	*moon*	—
Manichaean (Škend Gumānīg Wizār 16.8–20)	*earth*	mount	plants	—	—	—		—	—
Ovidius (Metamorphoses 4.655–662)	*mount*	stone	forest	—	—	—	top of cosmic mount	—	—
Alexandrian (II Enoch 30.8)	earth	stone	grass	dew	*wind*	sea [sun?]	—	—	*cloud*
Old Frisian (Code of Emsig)	earth	stone	grass	water/ *dew*	—	sun	—	*wind*	*cloud*
Middle Irish (British Mus. Add. MS 4783)	*earth*	stone	—	sea	wind	*sun*	—	—	*cloud*
Old Russian (Discourse of the Three Saints)	light of world	[stone]	—	sea	wind	sun	—	—	*cloud*
Rumanian (Questions and Answers)	*soil*	stone	—	dew	wind	sun	—	moon	*cloud*
Avestan (Greater Bundahišn 28)	earth	mount	plants	sea	wind	sun and moon	heaven	—	endless light
Hippocratic (Peri Hebdomadōn 6.1–2)	clay	stone	—	river/ *sea*	air	—	—	*moon*	soil
Empedoklēs	earth	stone	leaves	*sea*	*air and aither*	—	—	—	—

common Indo-European mythology. Moreover, in more general terms, it would demonstrate the ability of such complex cultural phenomena to survive for several millennia in illiterate societies.

This paper however tries to argue that the force of the comparative data is not compelling and we have here no proof at all of a common Indo-European myth. The parallelisms are rather due to the natural tendencies of human thinking and not to common origin.

First, let us consider a little more Indian material. If we combine the data of the sources considered by Lincoln, i.e. the *Puruṣa-Sūkta*,[11] the *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa*[12] and the *Aitareya-Upaniṣad*,[13] we find the following "standard" homological pairs: body–earth, hair–plants, bodily fluids–water, breath–wind, eye–sun, head–sky, and mind–moon. Also occur the particularly Indian connections mouth–fire and ear–directions, and the somewhat rare 'air filling the belly'[14]–atmosphere and feet–earth pairs. All of them (excepting feet–earth) are found together in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*[15] unnoticed by Lincoln, in a very precise and clear way.

---

[11] ṚV X.90,13–14:

candrámā mánaso jātáś cákṣoḥ sū́ryo ajāyata |
múkhād índraś câgníś ca prāṇā́d vāyúr ajāyata ||
nā́bhyā āsīd antárikṣaṁ śīrṣṇó dyaúḥ sám avartata |
padbhyā́m bhū́mir díśaḥ śrótrāt táthā lokā́m̐ akalpayan ||

In R.C. Zaehner's translation (Goodall 1996: 14):

From his mind the moon was born,
And from his eye the sun,
From his mouth Indra and the fire,
From his breath the wind was born.

From his navel arose the atmosphere,
From his head the sky evolved,
From his feet the earth, and from his ear
The cardinal points of the compass:
So did they fashion forth these worlds.

[12] *Sūryaṁ cakṣur gamayatād, vātaṁ prāṇam anvavasṛjatād, antarikṣam asuṁ, diśaḥ śrotraṁ, pṛthivīṁ śarīram.* (*Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa* 2.6) "Make its eye go to the sun; let loose its breath to the wind, its life to the atmosphere, its ear to the quarters, its body to earth." (Keith 1920: 139).

[13] *So 'dbhya eva puruṣaṁ samuddhṛtyâmūrcchayat.*
Tam abhyatapat. Tasyâbhitaptasya mukhaṁ nirabhidyata yathâṇḍaṁ, mukhād vāg, vāco 'gniḥ. Nāsike nirabhidyetām, nāsikābhyāṁ prāṇaḥ, prāṇād vāyuḥ. Akṣiṇī nirabhidyetām, akṣībhyāṁ cakṣuś, cakṣuṣa ādityaḥ. Karṇau nirabhidyetām, karṇābhyāṁ śrotraṁ, śrotrād diśaḥ. Tvaṅ nirabhidyata, tvaco lomāni, lomabhya oṣadhi-vanaspatayaḥ. Hṛdayaṁ nirabhidyata, hṛdayān mano, manasaś candramāḥ. Nābhir nirabhidyata, nābhyā apāno, 'pānān mṛtyuḥ. Śiśnaṁ nirabhidyata, śiśnād reto, retasa āpaḥ. (*Aitareya-Upaniṣad* 1.1,3–4).

From those very waters he drew out and gave a definite shape to a man. He incubated that man. From that man so incubated—
—a mouth was hatched like an egg; from the mouth sprang speech, and from speech, fire.
—a pair of nostrils was hatched; from the nostrils sprang out-breath, and from out-breath, the wind.
—a pair of eyes was hatched; from the eyes sprang sight, and from sight, the sun.
—a pair of ears was hatched; from the ears sprang hearing, and from hearing, the quarters.
—a skin was hatched; from the skin sprang the body hairs, and from the body hairs, plants and trees.
—a heart was hatched; from the heart sprang the mind, and from the mind, the moon.
—a navel was hatched; from the navel sprang the in-breath, and from the in-breath, death.
—a penis was hatched; from the penis sprang semen, and from semen, the waters. (Olivelle 1998: 317).

[14] Actually navel, *asu* and *ātman* are found; the first probably standing for middle of the body, the other two in their old meaning of (life-)breath.

[15] *Puruṣasya mṛtasyâgniṁ vāg apyeti, vātam prāṇaś, cakṣur ādityam, manaś candraṁ, diśaḥ śrotraṁ, pṛthivīm̐ śarīram, ākāśam ātmâuṣadhīr lomāni, vanaspatīn keśā, apsu lohitaṁ ca retaś ca nidhīyate…* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* 3.2,13).

When looking for such associations in the *Ṛg-Veda,* we find precious little beyond the *Puruṣa-Sūkta*, and all of them in the late first and tenth books. In I.65 the hairs of the earth are the plants[16] and in X.68 the skin of the earth is its surface;[17] so quite probably in I.79 the "skin" at the place of the pressing-stone that the gods satiate (with water)[18] is again the surface of the earth. All these could be viewed as metaphors only, but the following part of the funeral hymn X.16 clearly cannot:

> Let your eye go to the sun, your breath to the wind;
> and go to the sky and to the earth, according to nature;
> or go to the waters if that is fixed for you;
> dwell in the plants with your bodily parts.[19]

This is exactly the same idea found in the *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa* above, with the pairs breath–wind, eye–sun explicitly mentioned; while of the homologies body–earth, hair–plants, bodily fluids–water and head–sky only the macrocosmic half is named. All of them could be parts of the Indo-European heritage, and we miss only the couple bone–stone: it seems to be unknown in India.[20]

3. The myth in other cultures

Unfortunately, quite convincing parallels can be found with other peoples as well. A Chinese text from the third century BCE says:

> When the firstborn, P'an Ku, was approaching death, his body was transformed. His breath became the wind and clouds; his voice became peals of thunder. His left eye became the sun; his right eye became the moon. … His blood and semen became water and rivers. … his flesh became fields and land. … his bodily hair became plants and trees. His teeth and bones became metal and rock.[21]

We have here a more Indo-European version than anything in India, as it has also the pair bone–stone. Of course it is not *a priori* impossible that this myth (as also those in Tibetan,[22] Mongolian[23] and Finnish[24] folklore) are derived from some Indo-European source;[25] but it is quite improbable in the case of the Tahitian,[26] Aztec[27] and other native north American versions.

When a man has died, and his speech disappears into fire, his breath into the wind, his sight into the sun, his mind into the moon, his hearing into the quarters, his physical body into the earth, his self (atman) into space, the hair of his body into plants, the hair of his head into trees, and his blood and semen into water… (Olivelle 1998: 81).

[16] ṚV I.65,8: *yád vā́tajūto vánā vy ásthād agnír ha dāti rómā pṛthivyā́ḥ* || "When through the forest, urged by the wind, he spreads, verily Agni shears the hair of the earth." Griffith (1973: 44).

[17] ṚV X.68,4cd: *bṛ́haspátir uddhárann áśmano gā́ bhū́myā udnéva ví tvácam bibheda* || "So from the rock Bṛhaspati forced the cattle, and cleft the earth's skin as it were with water." Griffith (1973: 582).

[18] ṚV I.79,3cd: *aryamā́ mitró váruṇaḥ párijmā tvácam pṛñcanty úparasya yónau* || "Aryaman, Mitra, Varuṇa, Parijman fill the hide full where lies the nether press-stone." Griffith (1973: 50).

[19] ṚV X.16,3:
sū́ryaṁ cákṣur gachatu vā́tam ātmā́ dyā́ṁ ca gacha pṛthivī́ṁ ca dhármaṇā |
apó vā gacha yádi tátra te hitám óṣadhīṣu práti tiṣṭhā śárīraiḥ ||

[20] On the vast plains of the Indus and the Ganges stone is uncommon, not easily found hidden by the fertile soil, the flesh of the earth.

[21] *Wu yun li-nien chi.* See Birrel (1993: 33).

[22] Eliade, (1994–96: III. 230).

[23] Birtalan (1998: 10).

[24] "The fate of Aino", Rune IV. in the *Kalevala* (Crawford 1888: I. 61)

An Okanogan Indian legend may suffice as an example:

> The earth was once a human being. Old One made her out of a woman. … Earth is alive yet, but she has been changed. The soil is her flesh, the rocks are her bones, the wind is her breath, trees and grass are her hair. She lives spread out, and we live on her. When she moves, we have an earthquake.
>
> After taking the woman and changing her to earth, Old One gathered some of her flesh and rolled it into balls, as people do with mud or clay. He made the first group of these balls into the ancients, the beings of the early world… Thus all living things came from the earth. When we look around, we see part of our mother everywhere.[28]

We miss here only the blood–water transformation, as the eye/sun connection would be obviously inappropriate for Mother Earth.

4. The common source, empirically tested

All this suggests that both the pantheistic cosmogony and the detailed man/cosmos homologies can be found all over the world; what could be the source of this phenomenon? I feel that the explanation is basically the general human ability for analogies and metaphorical thinking. To me all these connections seem rather logical or at least natural; but sometimes intuition deceives us, so I wanted to be sure. Therefore, I asked university, primary and secondary school students how they would fill in the details of such a myth. "The gods created the world from the body of a giant cut into pieces. Which of his parts became what?"

All the details of the answers were very interesting for a number of reasons, but the general trend was clear. Their suggestions coincided in every respect with the traditional mythological accounts. Of the 223 persons giving valid answers more than 10% suggested the following pairs: hair–plant 56%;

All the waters in the blue-sea
Shall be blood of Aino's body;
All the fish that swim these waters
Shall be Aino's flesh forever;
All the willows on the sea-side
Shall be Aino's ribs hereafter;
All the sea-grass on the margin
Will have grown from Aino's tresses."

[25] For the Chinese myth, this position has been rejected by most modern studies. For a full treatment of all known variants of the Pangu myth and a convincing argument for a local (south Chinese) origin see Kósa (2007), in English Kósa (2009).

[26] Rockenbauer (1994: 13–14).

[27] Simor (1977: 153–154). – A good summary of the Aztec myth of the origin of the world from the parts of the ancient monster Tlaltecuhtli, taken from DeliriumsRealm (http://www.deliriumsrealm.com/tlaltecuhtli):

> Tlaltecuhtli ('Earth Lord') was a large earth monster in Aztec mythology described as female, who desires flesh and has mouths at her elbows, knees, and other joints.
>
> According to the Histoyre du Mechique, Tezcatlipoca and Quetzalcoatl agree that they can't continue with their re-creation of the world with her around, so they decide to destroy her. Transforming into two great serpents, one snake seizes her left hand and right foot while the other seizes her right hand and left foot. They then rip the monster apart – her upper body becoming the earth and her lower half is thrown into the sky to create the heavens.
>
> This act of violence angers the other gods, and in order to console the earth, it is decided that all plants needed for human life will be created out of her body. The trees, flowers, & herbs come from her hair. The grasses and smaller flowers come form her skin. The mountain ridges and valleys are made from her nose. Her eyes become the source of wells, springs and small caves, while her mouth becomes the source for great rivers and caverns.

[28] "Creation of the Animal People. [Okanogan]", in Erdoes–Ortiz (1984: 14–15).

blood–water 43%; eye–heavenly body 39%; bone–stone 28%; tear–rain 25%; flesh–earth 18%; hand–tree 18%; ear–cave 16%; head–heavenly body 13%; breath–wind 12%; head–sky 11%.

From the majority (189 persons) it was asked afterwards, how plausible they find the pairs suggested by others. The list of the most accepted alloforms: breath–wind 94%; tear–rain 90%; hair–plant 75%; ear–cave 72%; blood–water 70%; eye–heavenly body 70%; bone–stone 70%; flesh–earth 65%; brain–cloud 58%; hand–tree 56%; face–sun 51%; saliva–marsh 51%[29].

[29] First line: spontaneous mentioning of the pair (only values above 1% shown); second line, in brackets: positive answers to the question "Do you think this pair is plausible?" (The 'eye–other' acceptance value stands for eye–dawn).

223 persons (189 pers.)	earth	mount stone	plant	rain water	wind air	sun planet	sky	cloud	soil	cave	marsh	man	animal	other 165 p.
flesh, body	18% (65%)	3% (6%)											4%	
bone, tooth		28% (70%)								0% (18%)		3%		6%
hair			56% (75%)	3% (7%)	2%									3%
blood, bodily fluid				43% (70%)										4%
breath, spirit					12% (94%)		0% (23%)							5%
eye			2% (1%)	10% (16%)		39% (70%)	4%							4% (21%)
face						0% (51%)								
head	10%	0% (15%)				13% (37%)	11% (26%)					2%		2%
mind						0% (12%)								
bosom, heart	2%				0% (12%)	3% (24%)						4%		13%
brain, thought							0% (32%)	0% (58%)	0% (13%)			4%		5%
skin	5% (45%)						0% (22%)		3%					
ear, cavity										16% (72%)				10%
hand, fingers		2%	18% (56%)			3%						4%		7%
tear				25% (90%)										
saliva				3%							0% (51%)			
arm or leg	5%	10% (20%)	7%	2%								3%	5%	11%
other 165 persons	7%	21%	5%	6%	7%	9%	2%		4%			4%	7%	85%

Clearly, both factors are important. The creators and modifiers of the myth have to think of the connection spontaneously; and the audiences have to find it convincing in order to accept and remember it. Therefore, a combined value of the two[30] may be the most informative; in this list, the favourites were: hair–plant 42%; blood–water 30%; eye–heavenly body 27%; tear–rain 23%; bone–stone 20%; flesh–earth 12%; ear–cave 12%; breath–wind 11%; hand–tree 10%.

If we consider only the answers of the 109 adults[31] (which is reasonable as mythology is not really

[30] I take simply the product of the two percentages, e.g. 50% × 80% = 40%.

[31] 109 persons above 18.

109 persons (104 pers.)	earth	mount stone	plant	rain water	wind air	sun planet	sky	cloud	soil	cave	marsh	man	animal	other 76 p.
flesh, body	24% (75%)	3% (4%)												3%
bone, tooth	2%	28% (73%)								(19%)		2%		4%
hair			45% (75%)	4% (13%)	3%									4%
blood, bodily fluid				46% (76%)										3%
breath, spirit					20% (94%)		(25%)							9%
eye			(1%)	12% (20%)		50% (78%)								3% (22%)
face						(49%)								
head	3%	(21%)				16% (34%)	18% (36%)							
mind						(11%)								
bosom, heart					(9%)	(23%)								11%
brain, thought							4% (34%)	(63%)	(9%)					7%
skin	4% (43%)						(27%)							
ear, cavity										10% (69%)				9%
hand, fingers			4% (43%)									3%		5%
tear				22% (87%)										
saliva											(47%)			
arm or leg	6%	5% (18%)	6%									4%	6%	9%
other 76 persons	8%	21%	3%	8%	9%	9%	4%		5%			7%	5%	64%

children's business), the correspondence is even more striking. In this list of the combined values, only seven pairs will be above 10%: eye–heavenly body 39%; blood–water 35%; hair–plant 34%; bone–stone 20%; tear–rain 19%; breath–wind 19%; flesh–earth 18%. These seven correspond exactly to the six standard "Indo-European" pairs (those are six only because there both tear and blood were considered together under the heading "bodily fluid").

5. Conclusion

It seems that the main factors motivating the association of a human part with a cosmic phenomenon are constituent material (breath–wind), position (head : belly : feet – sky : atmosphere : earth) and form (ear–cave); sometimes a functional connection may also be relevant (eye–sun). In many of the most frequent associations more than one of these factors are at work; e.g. plants and hairs have similarly flexible material, their shape is typically elongated and they are on the surface (of the earth and of the person). All these factors are perceived rather universally, in different ages and different cultures.[32]

Our results therefore show that all the agreement in the details of the myth carries no extra weight in proving a common origin. We are left with nothing more than that many Indo-European peoples were more or less familiar with the microcosm/macrocosm homologies and some of them used this concept in a cosmogony where the world is created by the gods from the limbs of a dismembered primeval being.

As (a) this is also the case in many non-Indo-European traditions and (b) this kind of cosmogony is absent in the earliest Indo-European accounts and (c) our earliest record of a similar cosmogony comes from Mesopotamia[33] (that could well be the source of this motif both in the European and the Aryan tradition) – no sound argument remains to suggest an Indo-European *uhr-motif.*

The Mesopotamian myth[34] shows only a very rudimentary form: the god Marduk kills the sea-monster Ti'āmat, who is also mother of the gods.

> And with his merciless club he smashed her skull.
> He cut through the channels of her blood, …
> and devised a cunning plan.
> He split her up like a flat fish into two halves;
> One half of her he stablished as a covering for heaven.
> He fixed a bolt, he stationed a watchman,
> And bade them not to let her waters come forth.[35]

Here the creation of the sky is explicit, but also the origin of the earth and of the waters seems to be implied. If indeed this is the origin of the Indian accounts, the wandering Aryans may have learnt it; but equally possible is the suggestion that it arrived into India before them. The Harappan civilization

---

[32] In the children's answers, there were characteristic peculiarities. (a) They prioritized form, e.g. hand–trees; (b) their ideas were often "anachronistic", e.g. head–earth (globe).

[33] McEvilley (2002: 24–26) traces the motif of such a cosmology (not the specific creation myth), i.e. the idea of the cosmic person to even earlier Mesopotamian an Egyptian ideas.

[34] Komoróczy (1979: 538), referring to the work of W. G. Lambert and Th. Jacobsen, says that the mythologem came from Ugarit to Mesopotamia.

[35] King (2004: 17–18).

had well-established trade contacts with Mesopotamia; or the myth could have reached the Indus Valley somewhat later as a wandering folk-motif and become part of some unspecified substrate-culture.

The fact that the myth appears in the Vedic culture at the same time with the radical reinterpretation of the sacrifice suggests that it came to the Aryans only in India, either borrowed from other Indians or as a result of new internal development. Or, as I in fact suggest, as a significant modification of the borrowed universal motif.

III. Dravidian influence on Indo-Aryan

It is now a widely accepted opinion that Dravidian languages had an important effect on the development of Sanskrit. Most frequently mentioned aspects of this influence are loanwords, the appearance of retroflexion, the extensive use of gerunds and the quotative *iti* construction.[1] Perhaps the almost complete loss of old syntax (notably of subordinate sentences) and the appearance of a completely new syntactical structure, generally but misleadingly called "compounds"[2] might be considered even more important. Later in the Prakrits, the loss of the *ātmanepada* (middle or *medium*) conjugation and the dual, the disappearance of past finite verbal forms and the reduction of the modes to optative and imperative only[3] can all be explained in this way.

In this paper only one aspect, phonetics will be investigated, and in this wider context: from the earliest Vedic up to late Middle Indic. It will appear that all the important developments in Indo-Aryan phonetics during these some twenty centuries could be interpreted as due to a single constant and strong influence – that of a language with a phonetic structure similar to Tamil.

1. Retroflexion

The retroflex–dental opposition is very strong in Dravidian languages; and in Indo-Iranian it was absent, as in all Indo-European languages.[4] Retroflex pronunciation of some dentals *(puṣṭi)* and also retroflex phonemes *(gaṇa)* appears already in the *Ṛg-Veda*[5]; this became more and more widespread later, the number of retroflex phonemes increasing at least to the end of the Prakrit age. The most important source of this is the loss of the *r* or *ṣ* that conditioned the retroflexion (*duṣṭa* → *duṭṭha, varṇa* → *vaṇṇa*). Also, *r* frequently causes retroflexion in plosives (*prati* → **praṭi* → *paṭi*) and in later Prakrits we find many unexplained retroflexes (e.g. *nūṇaṁ* in Jaina Mahārāṣṭrī, Jacobi 1886; and even *ṇūṇaṁ* in Mahārāṣṭrī, Bubenik 1996: 60).

1 Burrow (1955: 373–88), Kuiper (1974: 146), Hock (1996: 18; 24–7), Bryant (1999: 61–5), Kobayashi (2004: 17).

2 Killingley–Killingley (1995: 42–7). The Dravidian origin of the long compounds in Indo-Aryan languages has been first seriously suggested only quite recently in an excellent paper by Scharfe (2006).

3 Of course, in Pali we still have a past tense, and also the conditional and the injunctive (in prohibitive use only). The loss of the injunctive in later Prakrits seems to be unmentioned in the grammars available to me (Pischel 1981, Woolner 1928, Bubenik 1996, Hinüber 2001), so I checked it in the Prakrit texts of Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā* and in Hāla's *Satta-saī* (Basak 1971) – it does not occur.

4 At least it is not mentioned for any other Indo-European language in Ramat–Ramat (1998).

5 From now on abbreviated as ṚV, always referring to the received text.

Although in the R̥V most instances of retroflexion are phonetically determined *(pūrṇa)*, i.e. they could be but allophones of dentals, some are clearly not *(jaṭhara)*. Especially important is the fact that the loss of the Proto-Aryan voiced sibilants (and they are absent already from our very earliest texts) occurred only after the phonemicization of retroflexion – otherwise we would have *nīda* and *īde* instead of *nīḍa* and *īḍe* in Sanskrit (*nīḷa* and *īḷe* in the R̥V), from Proto-Vedic **niẓḍa* and **iẓḍăi* (from **nizda* and **izdăi* by the RUKI-rule[6]). Similarly, such forms as *ānaṭ* (← **ānaṣṭ* ← *ānaś+t*), very frequent in the R̥V, prove that retroflex phonemes were already part of the language when final consonant clusters got reduced to a single consonant.

Although Deshpande (1993) showed convincingly that the R̥V-text we have significantly differs from the original phonetically and notably in the retroflexes, still we can say on the basis of the last two phenomena (*nīḍa, ānaṭ*) that the earliest form of the language documented in any way already had retroflex phonemes. An important and in the R̥V frequently mentioned family of *r̥ṣis*, the Kaṇvas, had a phonemic *ṇ* in their name. This may be a Prakritism for **Kr̥ṇva* (Mayrhofer 1992–96); but that would only show that their everyday language has suffered even more Dravidian influence *(r̥→a)* than what can be shown in Vedic.

Of course it is far from improbable that some of the older hymns of the R̥V were originally composed in a language earlier than known Vedic (in Proto-Vedic or even in Proto-Aryan), but this fact and this phase of the language must remain unknown to us.

2. Vowels

Proto-Vedic had the vowels *a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, r̥, r̥̄, l̥* and the diphthongs **ăi, *āi, *ău* and **āu.* Proto-Dravidian had neither vocalic *r̥* and *l̥* nor diphthongs, but had *e, ē, o* and *ō.* Already standard Sanskrit replaced **ăi* and **ău* (and in sandhi[7] **ăi-a* and **ău-a*) with *ē* and *ō.* The long diphthongs were shortened into *ai* and *au*; although not Proto-Dravidian phonemes, these do exist in Old Tamil.

Then in Middle Indic the remaining diphthongs, *ai* and *au* (and also *aya* and *ava* in any position) change to *ē* and *ō.* In certain environments these are shortened to *e* and *o,* and with the disappearance of vocalic *r̥* and *l̥* the end result is exactly the original Dravidian set of vowels: *a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, e, ē, o, ō*. All these changes were complete already by the age of Pali.

The reason for the appearance of short *e* and *o* in all Middle Indic dialects is the law of mora, according to which long vowels get shortened before consonant clusters and geminates (e.g. Pali *sĕṭṭhi* and *ŏkkamati* for Sanskrit *śrēṣṭhin* and *avakramati*). A similar rule seems to have been operative also in Proto-Dravidian, although with a somewhat restricted scope, i.e. within a morpheme.[8]

---

6 Stating that a dental sibilant changes to a retroflex after *r, k* and any vowel but *a/ā*.

7 Sandhi (*saṁ-dhi,* 'putting together, joining') is the general name of (rules governing) sound changes in Sanskrit, typically at morpheme or word boundaries – most often assimilation. Following general practice the use of the term is here extended to other languages as well.

8 Steever (1998: 17–18). This parallelism is far from clear, see Kobayashi (2004: 9, 165–6, 176, 182).

3. Final consonants

Dravidian speech habits do not favour final consonants. In modern Tamil, all words end in vowels (Schiffman 1999: 4); in Old Dravidian, some consonants did occur as finals – from among those allowed only *n, m* and *r* could also take this position in Old Indo-Aryan.

The loss of word-final consonants is already quite marked in Vedic: normally only a single consonant can remain at the end of a word. However, the reappearance of a dropped *s* after *n* in sandhi shows that the elision of the last consonant was (at least in this case) a recent phenomenon, not yet complete. E.g. *devā́ṁs tvám* for *devā́n* + *tvám,* earlier **devā́ns;* but *abruvan tád,* where no *s* was deleted. Another example is *ānaṭ*, quoted earlier, showing that the loss of final clusters was more recent than the appearance of retroflex phonemes. So it all happened already in India,[9] under the probable substrate influence of Dravidian.

Remaining single consonants at the end of words have also lost most of their attributes: no trace of aspiration or voicedness can be found (e.g. **triṣṭúbhs → triṣṭúp*) and place of articulation very weak (completely lost in the case of *m* and *s*). E.g. *tásmāj jātā́* for *tásmāt* + *jātā́; índraś ca* for *índras + ca;* and for *m* we have the anusvāra *ṁ*, i.e. a nasal without defined articulatory position.

This tendency continues so that in the Prakrits final consonants completely disappear (using techniques very similar to those used by Tamil to eliminate them, i.e. elision or adding a vowel, *a/u*); only nasals leave a trace as nasalisation of the final vowel – as in spoken Tamil to-day.

4. Sibilants

Proto-Dravidian had no sibilants at all, but already in Old Tamil the phoneme *c* was frequently pronounced as *s* or *ś* initially and intervocally (so Sanskrit *Śiva* is spelt *Civan* in Tamil, but the pronunciation is *śivan*). Proto-Vedic must have had six sibilants: *s, ś, ṣ,* and their voiced allophones *z, ź* and *ẓ*.[10]

By the age of the R̥V, the voiced sibilants have all disappeared, leaving different traces: probably first they were replaced by the available Old Dravidian approximants, *y, ẕ* and *w;* then *y* and *w* merged with the preceding vowel, resulting in Sanskrit *ē* and *ō* (e.g. **mazdhā → *maydhā → *măidhā→ mēdhā,* cf. Avestan *Ahura Mazdā*)*.* The retroflex approximant *ẕ* (normally transcribed as *ẓ, ḻ* or *ṟ*), the logical substitute for the retroflex sibilant *ẓ,* either dropped out lengthening the previous vowel (**ni-sda → *niẓḍa → *niẕḍa → nīḍa,* cf. English *nest*) or it came to be reinterpreted later as *r (*dus-ga → *duẓga → *duẕga → durga);* this reinterpretation of *ẕ* is not surprising, as it happened both in many Dravidian languages and also in many borrowings from Tamil to Sanskrit.

---

9 Not necessarily in the geographical sense. The Indus Valley Civilization had outposts outside India as far north as Shortugai on the Oxus, so it is not impossible that an Indian language with retroflexion (Dravidian?) was spoken in Afghanistan: many modern languages of the area (including the dominant Pashto) do have retroflex phonemes.

As an area including Afghanistan seems to have been the original home of the *Avesta*, this means that such "wider Indian" substrate influence is also possible there. This fact has a very important consequence for comparative studies: even if a phenomenon (be it linguistic, religious or cultural) can be found both in the Vedic and the Zoroastrian tradition, it does not prove that it is an ancient, extra-Indian, "original" element of the culture of the Indo-Iranian people(s).

10 The pronunciation of *ṣ* and *ẓ* was not necessarily retroflex; it may have been postalveolar. These sounds were but allophones (by the RUKI-rule) of *s* and *z*. Consequently, there were only two sibilant phonemes, *s* and *ś,* but their allophones showed distinctly different behaviour both in sandhi and in the development of the language.

Later, in the Middle Indic languages, the sibilants merge into one (in most dialects into *s,* in Magadhi into *ś*), and even that weakens into an aspiration in clusters. As in Old Tamil: the sibilant realization of the phoneme *c* can occur only initially and intervocally.

5. Consonant clusters

In Proto-Dravidian, consonant clusters are generally absent; only geminates and nasal + homorganic stop clusters can occur within a morpheme. Although in Old Tamil we find several consonant clusters on morpheme boundaries, most Sanskrit clusters are impossible (Lehmann 1994: 11, Rajam 1992: 52–112).

All Middle Indic languages closely follow the Proto-Dravidian pattern: only a single consonant can begin a word, and medially only geminates and nasal + homorganic stop clusters remain.

Initial consonants representing an old cluster, however, frequently get doubled in Prakrits as second members of compounds. As the previous word necessarily ends in a vowel, the position is now intervocalic, where geminates are acceptable. This phenomenon surprisingly resembles the Tamil sandhi whereby initial stops are doubled after vowels (although here obviously in order to preserve the unvoiced articulation).

6. Voicing

In middle Prakritic dialects, unvoiced intervocalic unaspirated stops generally become voiced (and velars typically disappear). This corresponds fairly well with the absence of the voiced/unvoiced phonemic contrast in Tamil, where intervocally all stops become voiced[11]. The velar phoneme *k*, however, remains unvoiced but gets spirantized, and this *χ* being absent from Indo-Aryan[12] might explain its loss in Prakrits. (It could have been substituted by *h*, but that was used for the Sanskrit aspirates.)

7. Aspiration

Old Dravidian had no aspirates. Already in Vedic in place of some voiced aspirates, we find only *h*; in the Middle Prakrits, *h* takes the place of all intervocalic aspirates. Tamil has an *h*-sound, the so-called *āytam*; and in modern pronunciation, the letter *k* is also realized as χ intevocally.

On the other hand, most Dravidian languages adopted aspirates from Indo-Aryan, but this lies outside the scope of this paper.

---

[11] Caldwell's law. The general opinion is that it was operative already in Proto-Dravidian (Steever 1998: 15). Mahadevan (2003: 247–51) challenges this, suggesting that Old Tamil had only unvoiced stops. However, it seems that some very early loanwords to Sanskrit clearly show the modern distribution of allophones: from Tamil *kuṇṭam, koṇṭai* and *nakar* we have Sanskrit *kuṇḍaḥ, kuṇḍaṁ* and *nagaraṁ* (DEDR, Mayrhofer 1992–96).

[12] To be more exact, the *jihvāmūlīya* can be found in some traditions, but never in this position – only word-finally before an unvoiced velar.

8. Sandhi

Accepting that Dravidian speech habits fundamentally influenced Indo-Aryan, we may suggest explanations for some of the more weird sandhis of Sanskrit. Although most external sandhi[13] rules are fairly natural, some are not: notably the handling of final *s*.

Visarga. Like *m, s* also loses its special point of articulation (i.e. as a dental), and before unvoiced consonants it can appear as a velar, palatal, retroflex, dental or bilabial spirant: *χ, ś, ṣ, s, φ,* depending on the point of articulation of the following consonant (although in most texts the velar *jihvāmūlīya* and the labial *upadhmānīya* are replaced by the neutral *visarga ḥ*). Old Dravidian has only one unvoiced spirant, an *h*-sound; and in Sanskrit the whole series was generally replaced by *visarga ḥ*. As Dravidian *h* cannot occur in final position, a Dravidian speaker would add an enunciative vowel – and this is the manner in which Indians pronounce the *visarga* of classical Sanskrit.

***s* → *r*.** Before voiced consonants a similar series of allophones must have existed: *γ, ź, (ẓ), z, β;* and before vowels, *z*[14] or *ẓ* (after the high vowels *i* and *u* by the RUKI-rule). As Old Dravidian had three voiced approximants *(y, ẕ* and *w), ẕ* was used for the retroflex *ẓ;* for the rest, *y* before front (palatal) vowels, *w* in other contexts. As mentioned above in the section on sibilants, *ẕ* was reinterpreted as *r;* and this is already the regular sandhi of *-is/-us* before voiced sounds.

***as* → *o*.** The *-ay/-aw* resulting from *-as* could turn into a diphthong, *ăi* or *ău* (later monophthongized as *ē* or *ō*). Before voiced consonants -*ō* is the regular sandhi.[15]

***as/e* + *a* → *o'/e'*.** This final *ău* and *ăi* (also of different origin, e.g. as a locative ending) have peculiar sandhi behaviour before vowels. Naturally, we would expect the consonantization of the second element into *v* and *y.* This must have been the Old Vedic sandhi; although the received Vedic text hides this, but the scansion shows:

I.37,13b *sáṁ ha bruvaté 'dhvann ā́*
The end of the line is ¯ ¯ ¯ , but it should be ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ :
*sáṁ ha bruvat**ay á**dhvan ā́*

III.9,4c *ánv īm avindan nicirā́so adrúho*
The ¯ ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ending should be ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘ ¯ :
*ánv īm avindan nicirā́s**av a**drúho*

Combining with a following initial *a-*, *-av+a-* and *-ay+a-* later became monophthongized as *ō/ē* (exactly as it happens in all Prakrits in all positions; perhaps through *ava* → *ŏvŏ* → *ŏŏ*→ *ō* and *aya* → *ĕyĕ* → *ĕĕ* → *ē*). The standard spelling with an *avagraha* or apostrophe (-*o'* and -*e'*) somewhat obscures the process.

***as/e* + V → *a* V.** Before vowels other than *a* the series *-av* V[back] and *-ay* V[front][16] could be reinterpreted as *-a v*V[back] and *-a y*V[front], where the initial *v/y* could be taken as the automatic,

[13] Sound changes at word boundaries, typically involving the last sound of a word and the first sound of the next.

[14] Not impossibly realized as *ź* before front vowels (*i*).

[15] And also the reflex of *-as* in most Prakrits. In the palatalizing Eastern (Magadhan) dialect, where *ś* took the place of *s*, the analogous result is -*ē* (*-as* → *-aś* → *-aź* → *-ay* → *-ăi* → *-ē*).

[16] V[back] stands for any back vowel (*u, o*) and V[front] = front vowel (*i, e*)

non-phonemic *v/y* added in many Dravidian languages before initial back/front vowels, and therefore understood as the sequence -*a* V, i.e. the standard Sanskrit sandhi.[17]

9. Conclusion

In the foregoing eight paragraphs, I hope to have demonstrated that all the major phonetic shifts in the history of Old and Middle Indo-Aryan – the appearance of retroflex phonemes as well as the gradual loss of diphthongs, syllabic consonants, final consonants, sibilants, consonant clusters, intervocalic aspirates and intervocalic unvoiced consonants –, all these could be attributed to the influence of a Tamil-like old Dravidian language. With this hypothesis, some of the more difficult sandhi phenomena of Sanskrit could also be explained.

Adding the other, fundamental grammatical features mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, and further that many syntactical innovations in New Indo-Aryan can be easiest explained as Dravidianisms: we can safely conclude that starting from the earliest times all along the classical period a Dravidian substrate influenced markedly the development of Indo-Aryan.

This result has implications far beyond the scope of linguistics. Language is part of the general culture – to an extent, they are inseparable. Where there is linguistic influence, there must be cultural interchange as well, including technical skills, music, dance, poetry, ritual and religious ideas. So it is no longer tenable to look for internal motives of development only, to try to explain the history of the culture recorded in Indo-Aryan languages as a result only of the previous phase of the same. We must keep on looking for "external", especially Dravidian input and also interaction of the two cultures.

A most important outcome of our investigations is that this Dravidian influence was already strongly felt in the earliest known phase of the language. Therefore, it is fully justified to explain religious developments *already in the R̥V* as due to the interaction of Aryan and Dravidian culture.

Further, since the R̥V was composed mostly in the Punjab, we have to say that when the Vedic Aryans came to India, the culturally dominant language in the Punjab was Dravidian. This would make it extremely improbable that *the Indus Valley Civilization was* not (at least partly) *a Dravidian culture*.

If we combine the last two remarks, we find that it is methodologically sound to explain shifts in the Aryan culture by influences from the descendants of the Indus Valley Civilization. Whenever we find a feature common in later Indian culture and the Indus Valley Civilization, but missing from the early Vedic data, we can safely assume that it is a survival: it survived in the substrate Dravidian culture and entered the Aryan tradition from there.

---

[17] When -*ay* is not the result of -*as* before front vowel, -*ay* V[back] also occurs and the *y* behaves similarly, although in this position it could not be taken for the automatic Dravidian *y*. This might be due to analogy, very strong in Sanskrit between the *i* and *u* sounds; or another Dravidian rule may come to play. „Initial *y in Proto-Dravidian is often lost when it is followed by a low vowel (Burrow 1945, Krishnamurti 2003:143); this reminds us of the anomalous loss of stem-initial /y/ in Skt. *prá-üga*-, and of the deletion of a final /y/ before a vowel in the Sanskrit sandhi rule /-e V-/ → -*a V*-, (x67), but the conditioning context there is not limited to low vowels but includes any vowel." Kobayashi (2004: 177).

IV. Language and reality

Uddālaka's thesis and Śaṅkara's interpretation

1. Omniscience and the unreality of phenomena

In the famous *Sad-Vidyā*, the VIth chapter of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, Uddālaka Āruṇi promises his son, Śvetaketu to teach him "that teaching which makes the unheard heard, the unthought thought and the unknown known."[1] This seems to imply omniscience. Clearly, this is how Śaṅkara understands it; he paraphrases Śvetaketu's request so: "**You yourself, sir, should tell me that** substance, knowing which I shall have omniscience."[2]

To European notions, this suggestion is shocking, but in the Indian scenery, rather densely populated with fully enlightened beings, it is not so astonishing. In a similar vein, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* Yājñavalkya says to Maitreyī: "by seeing, hearing, thinking and understanding the self everything is known."[3] Even more parallel is the question of Śaunaka to Aṅgiras at the beginning of the *Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad*: "What is it, sir, by knowing which all this will be known?"[4]

Still it is quite unusual to suggest that there is such a *verbal* teaching that can be asked for and freely given. The boy is astonished, or rather sceptical; he says, "Sir! How is such a teaching possible?"[5]

By way of explanation Āruṇi offers his son three similes, all referring to objects being known by their substance: "As, my dear, by one lump of clay everything made of clay can be known..."[6] The

1 *taṁ ādeśam [...], yenâśrutaṁ śrutaṁ bhavaty, amataṁ matam, avijñātaṁ vijñātam.* (*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.1.3.) 'Rule of substitution' (the translation in Olivelle 1998: 247) is probably accurate for *ādeśa*, but at the start of the discussion the vaguer meaning of 'instruction' etc. seems more appropriate.

2 ***Bhagavāṁs tv eva me*** *(mahyaṁ)* ***tad*** *vastu, yena sarva-jñatvaṁ jñātena me syāt, tad* ***bravītu*** *(kathayatu) ity…* (Śaṅkara: *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣya* VI.1.7.) The part of the text that is taken directly from the Upaniṣad passage commented upon is shown in bold.

3 *Ātmano vā are darśanena, śravaṇena, matyā, vijñānenêdaṁ sarvaṁ viditam.* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* II.4.5.)

4 *Kasmin nu, bhagavo, vijñāte sarvam idaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati?* (*Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad* I.1.3.)

5 *Kathaṁ nu, bhagavaḥ, sa ādeśo bhavati?* (*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.1.3.) The exact force of *bhavati* is not quite clear here, but 'is possible' seems to be consonant with Uddālaka's answer and also with Śvetaketu's remark a little later that his teachers surely did not know about it.

6 *Yathā, somyâikena mṛt-piṇḍena sarvaṁ mṛnmayaṁ vijñātaṁ syāt...* (*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.1.4.)

other two examples are a copper amulet for copper and a nail-cutter for iron.[7] He always adds the refrain: *vācârambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāma-dheyaṁ mṛttikêty* [etc.] *eva satyam*.[8] This sentence is notoriously unclear, and has been repeatedly analysed by eminent Indologists, with widely different results.[9]

Its traditional interpretation is well represented by Radhakrishnan's translation: "the modification being only a name arising from speech while the truth is that it is just clay."[10] In spite of numerous interesting suggestions as to the construction of the sentence or the grouping of its words, the fundamental understanding seems to be the same with all translators.[11] For anything, e.g. a pot, made of clay, that it is a 'pot' is just a name – "it is clay", only this much is truth. So, if *only* 'clay' is truth, then 'pot' is not truth, it is unreality, it must be illusion.

If this analysis is correct, this important text supports *māyā-vāda*: ultimately only the substance, i.e. *Brahman* is real, the modifications, the apparent diversity of the world is only conventional, "depends on speech". For us this way of expressing the unreality of the world seems startling, but in Buddhist parlance phenomenality was routinely expressed as 'popular truth' (*laukika-satya*), 'consensual truth' (Pāli *sammuti-sacca* Sanskritized as *saṁvṛti-satya*) or 'linguistic truth' (*vyavahāra-satya*).

2. Śaṅkara's misinterpretation and his motives

Of course, this approach goes back to the great master of Advaita Vedānta, rigorous monism, Śaṅkara, who inherited from the Buddhists among other things the theory of double truth (everyday and absolute truth). It will be rewarding to see his interpretation; as he is quite determined to make our text a scriptural authority for his illusion-theory, at certain points he will take recourse to obvious

---

7 *Loha-maṇi, lohamaya, loha; nakha-nikṛntana, kārṣṇâyasa, kṛṣṇâyasa.* (*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.1.5–6.)

8 *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.1.4.

9 For some references see the Bibliography in Olivelle (1998: 643–652), and his Notes *ad loc*., p. 558.

10 Radhakrishnan (1953: 447). As a matter of fact, he adds in a note that the text does *not* suggest "that change rests simply on a word, that it is a mere name", but he does not explain the difference between 'only a name' and 'a mere name'. Here he just repeats what he said earlier (Radhakrishnan 1929: I. 188 note): "Its meaning seems to be that all are modifications of the one substance, marked by different names. [... T]he development is noticed by the giving of a different name."

He seems to follow Barua (1921: 138–139, note 3):

> We think that Uddālaka meant by Vikāra transformation, transfiguration of Matter or the material, in short, phenomenal changes. We perceive in him no conscious attempt at explaining away all objective changes by saying like a Buddha or a Śaṅkara that "It is a mere name arising from current language, and nothing more." He did not certainly deny the reality of change, change in respect of form, not of matter, otherwise what is the force of "*nāmarūpe vyākarot*" (*Chāndogya[-Upaniṣad]*, VI. 3.3), *vyākarot*, a verbal form of Vikāro. We take accordingly the passage to mean that it bears a name, a linguistic expression, corresponding to a palpable formal change in matter.

While I think that their intuition is fundamentally correct, I do not see how they could find this meaning in the Sanskrit text, given the translations they use.

11 With the obvious exception of van Buitenen (1955 and 1958). He translates the half-sentence *vācārambhaṇam vikāraḥ* as "(the Supreme's) CREATION IS (his) TAKING HOLD OF VĀC" (1958, p. 304), and *nāmadheyam trīṇi rūpāṇīty eva satyam* as "THE NAME (of the supreme) IS SATYAM, I.E. (as analysed in three syllables sa-ti-yam) THE THREE RŪPAS" (1958, p. 302).

Though these articles are full of insightful suggestions, their conclusion seems to be untenable. If we try to use this translation for the first occurrences of the sentence, we get: "As, my dear, by one lump of clay everything made of clay can be known, creation is taking hold of *vāc*, the name is *satyam*, i.e. clay" – which is several degrees more obscure than the original Sanskrit.

distortions. These can be our starting-point to find out the undistorted, natural, hopefully original meaning.

> **As** in the everyday world **by** having known **one lump of clay** (being the cause of things like shining[12] jars), **everything** else that is a kind of its modification, i.e. **made of clay** (i.e. a kind of modification of clay) **can be known**. – How can a different thing, the effect, be known by knowing the lump of clay, the cause? There is no fault here, because the effect is identical with the cause. If you think, nothing is known by knowing something else – this would be true, if the effect would be different from the cause; but the effect is not so different from the cause.
>
> Then how is it so in the everyday world: "This is the cause, this is its modification?" Listen! It is **seizing by speech**, beginning with speech, dependent on speech. What is that **modification?** It is **naming**. ('Naming' is the same as 'name'; the '-ing' affix here does not modify the sense.) It depends only on speech, it is but a mere name; the modification is in fact not a substance. In an absolute sense **'clay', only this is truth** = but only the clay is a true substance. (4)
>
> **As, my dear, by one copper amulet** (piece of gold), **everything** else that is some kind of modification like a bracelet, a diadem or an armlet **can be known**. [...] (5)
>
> **As, my dear, by** having observed **one nail-cutter** (its meaning is a piece of iron) **everything made of iron**, i.e. some kind of modification of iron, **can be known**. [...] (6)[13]

1. First we may wonder why Śaṅkara explains an amulet (or ornament) and a pair of nail-clippers as a piece (or lump) of gold and iron, respectively. He wants to say that effects are unreal, so you have to know the cause; therefore an illustration suggesting that from one effect you can know another one will not fit his purpose. So he tries to make it seem that the text speaks about their material, i.e. the cause.

However, it does not; it speaks about the *things* made of that material, copper and iron. And the probable reason is that Uddālaka has not the slightest doubts about their ontological status – they are existent in the full sense.

2. Secondly, he says that nothing can be known by knowing something else. He does not argue for this thesis, because he introduces it seemingly as a *pūrva-pakṣa*, the opinion of the opponent. Then he says – well, O.K., I have to accept it, but in spite of this, our position stands, as this objection is relevant only when the two things are different.

It is cunning: he hides an important interpretative presupposition as an ostensible counter-argument. He has to do it, because it is neither true (seeing the snow I can know the cold); nor is it in the text. In fact, Āruṇi says something different, almost its opposite: knowing the qualities of one

---

[12] We would expect here the name of some other object typically or often made of clay, but in the dictionaries, I could not find such a meaning for *rucaka.*

[13] ***Yathā*** *loke* ***ekena mr̥t-piṇḍena*** *rucaka-kumbhâdi-kāraṇa-bhūtena vijñātena* ***sarvam*** *anyat tad-vikāra-jātaṁ* ***mr̥n-mayaṁ*** *mr̥d-vikāra-jātaṁ* ***vijñātaṁ syāt****. – Kathaṁ mr̥t-piṇḍe kāraṇe vijñāte kāryam anyad vijñātaṁ syāt? Nâiṣa doṣaḥ, kāraṇenânanyatvāt kāryasya. Yan manyase: "'nyasmin vijñāte 'nyan na jñāyata" iti – satyam evaṁ syāt, yady anyat kāraṇāt kāryaṁ syān; na tv evam anyat kāraṇāt kāryam.*

Kathaṁ tarhîdaṁ loka: "idaṁ kāraṇam, ayam asya vikāra"iti? Śr̥ṇu! ***Vācârambhaṇaṁ*** *vāg-ārambhaṇaṁ vāg-ālambanam ity etat. Ko 'sau* ***vikāro****?* ***Nāma-dheyaṁ****. (Nāmâiva nāma-dheyam, svârthe 'dheya'-pratyayaḥ.) Vāg-ālambana-mātraṁ nāmâiva kevalaṁ; na vikāro nāma vastv asti. Paramârthato* ***mr̥ttikêty eva*** *mr̥ttikâiva tu* ***satyaṁ*** *vastv asti. (4)*

Yathā, saumyâikena loha-maṇinā *suvarṇa-piṇḍena* ***sarvam*** *anyad vikāra-jātaṁ kaṭaka-mukuṭa-keyūrâdi* ***vijñātaṁ syāt****. [...] (5)*

Yathā, saumyâikena nakha-nikr̥ntanen*ôpalakṣitena ('kr̥ṣṇâyasa-piṇḍenê'ty arthaḥ)* ***sarvaṁ kārṣṇâyasaṁ*** *kr̥ṣṇâyasa-vikāra-jātaṁ* ***vijñātaṁ syāt****.* (Śaṅkara: *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣya* VI.1.4-6.)

thing, you can infer the qualities of another thing made of the same stuff. Seeing a bottle break, you can know that the window might be broken.

3. Śaṅkara changes the phrase "'Clay', only this is truth" to "but only the clay is a true substance". He does this perhaps because here he wants to understand 'speech' and 'name' as synonyms of the irreal, the nonexistent. In the original it would not work: *satyam,* 'true' or 'truth' there refers to another linguistic entity, the sentence "Clay" or "It is clay".

So we might infer that in the Upaniṣad itself language did not have this depreciative, negative value. It was perfectly neutral; in our text, it was never actually called false, rather in one place it was emphatically called true.

4. Lastly Śaṅkara equates "seizing by speech", with "beginning with speech", changing an instrumental case into a compound. Then further glosses as "dependent on speech", changing the verb *ā-rabh* 'to take hold of, to begin' into *ā-lamb*, 'to hang from, to depend'. This seems unjustified.[14] If we reject this, as we should, we may see what *vācā ārambhaṇam* could have originally meant.

As *vācā* is an instrumental, 'with/by speech', *ārambhaṇa* must mean an action of which language is the agent or the instrument. So language grasps, or somebody grasps with language. As 'beginning' is an important semantic element in the verb *ā-rabh*, I would prefer to interpret our word as 'seizing at first', 'first grasping'.

3. The original contrast of naming and truth

With this understanding the opposition: 'modification' and '*first* grasping' on the one side, *satyam* on the other, can be interpreted anew. The verb *as*, 'exist', and its participle, *sat*, 'existent, real' is frequently contraposited to *bhū*, 'become' and *bhāva*, 'becoming, transition'. So *satyam* (derived from *sat*) would here specifically designate '*constant* truth, unchanging reality'; this, I think, is nicely consonant with its typical Upaniṣadic use. Moreover, this is especially relevant in this text, where the final principle, the single eternal substance is not called Brahman, but *sat,* the Existent.

With these insights, it is now possible to interpret our sentence. Though I am fairly convinced that in the absence of punctuation the *mahā-vākya* ('great sentence') cannot be unambiguously analysed, I propose a tentative translation:

> The designation is the specific modification, as the (first) grasping by language; only "clay" is (constant) truth.

This would mean something like this. Though we first (or normally) designate things by their form, their material is constant, while the form is transient. We say, "This is a cup" (or spoon or plate), not that "This is metal" (or clay or wood). Nevertheless, when we melt it, the metal will still be there, but the cup will be gone.

Now this is a merry outcome. Because what we got is, more or less, true; and what is more, it can be easily seen that it is true. And that means that it can be used as a *clear illustration*, a *dr̥ṣṭānta*, to explain and to convince. At its present location in the text, at the very start of a lengthy argument, that

[14] The overlap in meaning between *ā-rabh* and *ā-lamb* facilitates this shift. Strangely enough, Olivelle (1998: 558) seems to suggest something similar. "The phrase is more easily explained, because *ārambhaṇa* is regularly used in the Upaniṣads with the meaning of support or foothold, especially the lack of such a support in the atmosphere: C[*hāndogya-*]U[*paniṣad*] 2.9.4; B[*r̥hadāraṇyaka-*]U[*paniṣad*] 3.1.6." Now in both places we find – at least in all the editions I had access to – *an-āram**b**aṇa*! (It is the more surprising because Olivelle translates *vācārambhaṇa* with "a verbal handle", so he does not need the trick, as 'handle' is a regular meaning of *ārambhaṇa.*)

is what it should be. It is meant to point out through an everyday example how it is possible that knowing one thing innumerable others are known. An obscure metaphysical statement about the language-dependence of perceived reality would be extremely inappropriate at this position.

The truth of this insight can easily be understood, but at the same time, it is not a triviality. It is an important new observation about the relation of language and the deep structure of reality. Language concentrates on the specific and changing (the form), and relatively neglects the universal and constant (the substance).

Therefore, what Uddālaka Āruṇi promised his son was not omniscience but universal knowledge – and he gave him a teaching about the universal substance. Because types of stuff are more basic than the constantly changing manifestations, there is less variety among them. In his doctrine there are only three final constituents (*rūpa*, colour/form[15]) of the world (called *tejas, āpaḥ, anna* – heat, water, food). And, in contrast to the infinite variety of the individual objects, they can be completely known. Āruṇi did fulfil his promise.

[15] And even they are called *rūpa*s, because in the last analysis they are but forms of the one eternal substance, the Existent, *sat*.

V. Parmenides and the early Upaniṣads

It has been noticed quite early[1] that the philosophy of Parmenides shows very interesting and significant parallelisms with the thought of the Upaniṣads, especially the teaching of Uddālaka Āruṇi as imparted to his son, Śvetaketu in the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*. Both present a strong monism, calling their absolute principle that pervades the whole universe Being (or Existent), and traditionally both are understood as denying the reality of the phenomena, calling them mere names (as opposed to the Truth of the Being).

Such similarity might be (1) the result of independent, analogous thinking; or (2) either of them influenced the other; or (3) both received some common or related external influence. The standard position seems to be the first: "The views of Parmenides, therefore, must be deemed a parallel of interest to Indian thought, but not derived from India." (Keith 1925: 637. – Of course this position can be called *standard* only with some reservations, as many Indologists and most Greek scholars don't seem to be aware of the question at all.[2]) An excellent representative of this approach with many new textual comparisons can be found in Nakamura (1975: 103–112); he, however, does not even consider the possibility of influence, as his interest is in universal thought structures.

Sometimes the third alternative is suggested, in two distinct forms. The analysis of West (1971) is generally sound and convincing: he suggests that there was a general flow and mixing of religious and philosophical ideas and motifs throughout the classical world, even as far to the East as China; and our authors may have derived their common themes from this common pool.[3] (West proposes this as a general model, not specifically to explain the close correspondences of Parmenides and the Upaniṣads; and as a general theory, probably nothing stronger is possible.)

The second form of the third type has been, a little surprisingly, quite recently brought forward by Ježić (1992) in an otherwise excellent article that points out many significant correspondences that usually avoid detection. He suggests that the source of the parallels is the common Indo-European tradition, "that philosophy and ontology are inherited from the times before Uddālaka and Parmenides, from a far deeper past than historians of philosophy used to dream of" (p. 434). Notwithstanding the inherent absurdity of the hypothesis (nomadic tribes developing such abstract philosophical views and

---

1 A useful summary can be found in Keith (1925), Ch. 29.

2 Most of them would have heard of the possible Indian connections of Pythagoras, but keep silent on it. Flintoff (1980: 88–91) gives a good account of the typical attitude of Greek scholars.

3 His more precise suggestion, that the bearers of eastern influence to Greece were the Magi, refugees from Media after its conquest by Cyrus in 549 BCE (pp. 239–241), is far from convincing. E.g., this could not explain Indian influence, as at that time no Indian territory was yet under Iranian rule.

remembering them for several thousand years), the suggestion is methodologically unsound. If the common points were indeed parts of an old inheritance, many of those elements should have surfaced before our thinkers. Now their parallelism is so easy to notice and so interesting exactly because both are so different from anything before them in their respective traditions.

In this paper I shall try to argue for the second position, i.e. that our texts have directly influenced each other. Beyond the essential parallelism, there are numerous minor analogies of expression that cannot be explained in any other way. In the end, balancing the – admittedly meagre – evidence I will suggest that most probably it was Parmenides who travelled to India, learned the language and some texts, and used their ideas and words to build his new synthesis upon.

This is consonant with the findings of McEvilley in his seminal book, who proposes an Indian source for many of the ideas of the pre-Socratic philosophers; however in the case of Parmenides (although emphasising the fundamental parallelism with Uddālaka Āruṇi's thought) he refrains from any specific suggestion of contact (McEvilley 2002: 52–61).

As my conclusion will not be that Parmenides accidentally got hold of a copy of the 6th chapter of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, but that he went to India and familiarised himself with several philosophical texts and ideas, I will sometimes suggest Indian parallels from other texts as well, mostly from other old Upaniṣads. For the same reason the exposition will generally follow Parmenides (though the exact sequence of his fragments is sometimes debated), and try to find a possible source for the idea or wording.

1. The frame story

Parmenides wrote in hexameters, and his poem consists of three parts: introduction (*Prooimion*), ontology (*Alētheia*) and natural philosophy (*Doxa*).[4] The *Sad-Vidyā* ('The knowledge of the Existent', *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* Chapter VI – prose), although this is frequently overlooked, consists of two separate texts: the first is contained in parts 1–2, 4–7 (*khaṇḍa* 3 is a later addition), while the second is in parts 8–16.[5] The first text shows a similar structure: introduction (1), ontology (2, 4) and some elements of a philosophy of nature (5–7).

The introduction in both cases sets the scene for the instruction, and then promises to teach some important universal truth; the similarities end here. In the Upaniṣad, Śvetaketu returns home after a twelve-year training in traditional Vedic lore, proud of his learning. However, when his father asks him if he had received "that teaching by which ... what had [hitherto] not been known, is known?"[6] he confesses that he had not even heard of it. Thereupon Uddālaka starts to instruct him.

In the Parmenidean proem, the poet journeys on a horse-drawn chariot to the gates of day and night, led by the daughters of the Sun. Persuaded by them, Dikē[7] (goddess of justice) opens the heavy gate, and starts to instruct Parmenides: "you should learn all things, both the unshaken heart of well-rounded truth, and the opinions of mortals, in which there is no true reliance."[8]

---

4 It is interestingly, and I think relevantly parallel to the three standard 'sources of valid knowledge' *(pramāṇa)* of the Indian tradition, i.e. revelation (or scripture, or verbal information), inference and perception *(śabda, anumāna, pratyakṣa).*

5 Hanefeld (1976: 142–143); on the intrusion of *khaṇḍa* 3 see pp.146–149.

6 VI.1.3, translation: R.C. Zaehner in Goodall (1996: 132).

7 If "the Goddess" is really Dikē (named quite some lines before), or unnamed, or Nux, is not entirely clear.

8 Fr. 1.28–30; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 243).

It is not at all unusual to have a frame story in an Upaniṣad where a man receives instruction from a god. Also in the *Chāndogya*, in Chapter VII, the sage Nārada goes to Sanat-Kumāra ('Eternal Youth', son of the creator god) for teaching, and in VIII.7–12 the god Indra and the demon Virocana ask the Lord of Creation (Prajā-Pati) about the Self. In the *Kauṣītaki* (Chapter III), it is Indra who teaches the king Pratardana. In the *Taittirīya*, the sage Bhr̥gu seeks wisdom from his father, Varuṇa, the ancient god of moral order.

But we have a really interesting parallel in the story of Naciketas as told in the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*. This text has been more than once quoted in a Parmenidean context. Barua (1921: 264) actually thinks, "that the place of Naciketas in Indian philosophy is very similar to that of Parmenides in the history of Greek thought. ... The analogy ... is in certain points very close." Though this is partly based on unsubstantiated conjecture,[9] there are noteworthy coincidences. In any case, the characters here and in the *Sad-Vidyā* suggest that the two texts are closely related: Naciketas is a grandson of Uddālaka Āruṇi.[10]

The story in the Upaniṣad is told in archaic, loose verse. Vājaśravasa gave away all his possessions at a great sacrifice; his son, Naciketas insisted that he should be given, too. The father finally declares, "I'll give you to Death." Now Death is away on some errand, and keeps Naciketas waiting in his palace for three days without offering him the hospitality due to a Brahmin. As compensation, he offers the boy three boons; and he selects to return to the earth alive and to get reconciled to his father. The third boon is the secret of whether there is existence after death: and with this topic, the teaching starts.

Though it is far from apparent, Coxon[11] has brilliantly demonstrated that Parmenides also travelled to the place of the dead. Quoting similar phrases from Homer and Hesiod he shows that the image of "the gates of the paths of Night and Day" (1.11) recalls the gates of Tartarus. From the testimonies of Simplicius and Numenius we know that according to Parmenides the Goddess sends the mortal souls to birth, and then back to the gods ("now from the visible to the invisible, and now in the opposite direction" – Simplicius) through double gates. The epithet of Dikē, *polupoinos* (having many punishments, 1.14) identifies her as the goddess of retribution – judge of the dead. And the welcome in 1.26, "No ill fate [*moira kakē*] has sent you" suggests the unusualness of Parmenides arriving here alive.

Coxon thinks that the route leads from the dark regions of the mortals through celestial gates to the gods, into the light, but this can be doubted.[12] As the terminology of Simplicius suggest (*tas*

---

[9] "There can be no doubt that the verse relating to the doctrine of Being is missing from the Kaṭhopaniṣad as we now have it. We supply it from the Bhagavad Gītā..." (p. 272)

[10] Barua (1921: 265); Olivelle (1998: 601) understands the obscure patronymic Auddālaki Āruṇi in *Kaṭha* I.11 as suggesting that Naciketas is a son of Uddālaka. In the *Mahā-Bhārata* (MBh XIII.70.3), the father is Uddālaki, the son Nāciketa. Macdonell–Keith (1912: 432) probably rightly doubts the historicity of the attribution as "due only to a desire to give Naciketas a connexion with the famous Āruṇi." Still it shows that the two texts were considered as belonging to a related tradition.

[11] Coxon (1986: 12–17 and 161–167), in the notes *ad* 1.11; 1.14 (*dikē poluponos*); 1.22; 1.26–27.

[12] So also Sedley (1999: 113): "an allegorical description of Parmenides' journey to the House of Night". Actually Burkert (1969: 14–15) in his excellent study has already arrived at a conclusion very similar to the one suggested here:

> Die Fahrt des Parmenides ist weder ein Übergang von der Nacht zum Licht noch eine Auffahrt ... Parmenides fährt auf dem Weg des Daimon zum Rand der Welt, wo an der Grenze von Himmel und Erde ein hochragendes Tor Diesseits und Jenseits scheidet. Aus dem Haus der Nacht kommen ihm die Heliaden entgegen, sie geleiten ihn durch das Tor in die große 'Offenheit', wo ihn die Göttin empfängt ...Eher wäre die Reise – mit Morrison – eine Katabasis zu nennen. Richtiger aber ist es, die Vertikale, das Oben und Unten überhaupt aus dem Spiel zu lassen.

psukhas pempein pote men ek tou emphanous eis to aides[13]), the visible region of light must be understood as the world of men, and the invisible (*aides* ~ *Aidēs* = *Haidēs*) as the dark land of the dead. The expression "the daughters of the Sun ... having left the halls of Night" (1.9) clearly recalls the description in the *Theogonia* (744–766): the abode of the Night stands in Tartarus, and Day and Night meet daily on its threshold; in this palace live also the sons of Night, Sleep and Death. So probably the divine maidens have left their dark home in the netherworld to meet Parmenides and lead him there.[14, 15]

Though the divinities mentioned in the two texts are not identical, but their functions come close to each other: as we saw above, here Dikē supervises birth and death, while the Indian god of death, at least from the *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka* on (Keith 1925: 409), also judges the dead, and in the epic he is identified with Dharma, Law.

The similarity of the frame stories lends some extra weight to an otherwise not fully convincing comparison, brought up again recently by Ježić (1992: 429–430). The Parmenidean journey is normally interpreted symbolically, as the progress of the seeker towards enlightenment; Sextus Empiricus (our only source for fragment 1) gives a more detailed "translation". His identifications are: horses – the unintelligent impulses and longings of the soul; journey on the road of the Goddess – contemplation through philosophical reasoning; maidens – the senses; wheels – the ears; daughters of the Sun – the eyes; Dikē holding keys – the intellect grasping the facts.[16] Though this analysis is normally discarded without giving it serious thought, but as Plato also compares the soul to a chariot (*Phaedrus* 246b ff.), the idea is old, and nothing excludes the possibility that it goes back to Parmenides. Now in the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* we read:

> Know this: the self is the owner of the chariot,
> the chariot is the body.
> Understanding is the charioteer,
> and mind is the reins.
>
> The senses, they say, are the horses,
> and sense objects are their ranges. ...
>
> The man whose charioteer is wisdom,
> whose reins a mind [controlled],
> reaches the journey's end,
> Viṣṇu's highest step[, heaven].[17]

If Parmenides indeed had an allegoric interpretation of his proem, something like this could have been his model.

---

[13] Simplicius *in phys.* p. 39, quoted from Coxon (1986: 146), testimonium 207.

[14] That the proem describes a travel from the inferior sphere of light, the world of mortals, to the divine region of night, squares very well with the fascinating suggestion of Popper (1998: 68–104, esp. 72–73 and 87–88) that of the two forms that the mortals name (8.53–59 and 9.), Night would be equivalent to Being, and Light (that should not have been mentioned) to Non-being. (But Popper himself understood the journey to lead from darkness to light; see e.g. p. 292.)

[15] This argument is not central to our thesis, as in the older literature the Indian dead seem to live with the gods in heaven under their king, Yama. A little later Yama (already as god of Death) rules over both heaven and hell.

[16] *Adv. math.* VII,111–113; in Coxon (1986: 125) testimonium 136. See Steiger (1985: 46).

[17] *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* III.3–4 and 9, translation based on R.C. Zaehner's in Goodall (1996: 175). A similar description is found at *Maitrī-Upaniṣad* II.6; further examples are listed in Hume (1931: 540).

Besides having a mystical and a symbolic meaning, the description of the far-away journey in search of knowledge can also be a reminiscence of an actual chariot-ride some time in Parmenides' youth to India. If the reading *astē* in 1.3 is correct, then the characterisation of the road: "which bears the man who knows over all cities" recalls the initial lines of the Odyssey; and that is after all a (mythological) record of an earthly voyage.

2. The true method and criticism of other approaches

Parmenides starts his metaphysics with the premise: Nothing, or the non-existent does not exist; therefore there is only Being or (the) Existent (fr. 2, 6, 7). This strictly logical starting-point (and, in general, the formal-deductive way of exposition) is alien to the Upaniṣads,[18] and anything like it can be found only in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (probably several centuries later):

> The non-existent cannot be,
> the existent cannot not-be:
> the boundary of the two has been seen
> by those who see their essence.[19]

The Existent should be approached with the mind, not with the senses:

> let [not] habit, born of much experience, force you down this way [of accepting non-existence], by making you use an aimless eye or an ear and a tongue full of meaningless sound: judge by reason the strife-encompassed refutation spoken by me.[20]

This warning also frequently recurs in the Upaniṣads, e.g.

> His form is not something that can be seen;
> no one beholds him with the eye;
> by heart, thought and mind is he conceived of.[21]

The insufficiency of the senses is also plainly stated by Uddālaka in the illustration of the fig tree: the essence that cannot be seen in the tiny seed is the source of the gigantic *nyagrodha*-tree; and in the simile of salt water – the salt cannot be seen or grasped, but it is still there, dispersed in the water.[22]

The not entirely clear fr. 4 of Parmenides seems to connect two ideas: with the mind, we can see things far away, and (or because?) the ontological universe is homogenous.

> Gaze on even absent things with your mind as present and do so steadily. For it will not sever Being from cleaving to Being, as either dispersing or gathering in every direction in every way in regular order.[23]

It is remarkable to find a very similar pair of ideas in India:

> That is, indeed, this.

---

[18] The wording of *Kaṭha* VI.12 seems Parmenidean, but the context is generally not argumentative. "How could It be apprehended except by saying, *It is*?" *astîti bruvato 'nyatra kathaṁ tad upalabhyate?*

[19] *Bhagavad-Gītā* II.16. *nâsato vidyate bhāvo, nâbhāvo vidyate sataḥ / ubhayor api dṛṣṭo 'ntas tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ.*

[20] Fr. 7.3–6; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 248).

[21] *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* VI.9, translation based on R.C. Zaehner's in Goodall (1996: 182). (*Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad* IV.20 is practically identical.)

[22] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.12 and 13.

[23] Translation: Coxon (1986: 56).

Whatever is here, the same is over there;
and what is over there is along here.
From death to death he goes,
who sees here any kind of diversity.

With your mind alone you must understand it –
there is here no diversity at all![24]

The vexed question of the relation of speech, thought and existence in Parmenides cannot be fully discussed here. Although some fragments suggest their identity,[25] it is safer to base our interpretation on the relatively clear occurrences. "You can neither know what is not (for it is impossible) nor tell of it",[26] i.e. what can be cognised or expressed must exist.[27] On the other hand, thinking and saying do seem to be very close for Parmenides, and this connection is well established very early also in India. "Thought (*mati*) is indeed speech: for he thinks all this with speech",[28] i.e. we express our thoughts in words.

In this part of the poem, Parmenides repeatedly refers to the great tradition behind the argument about Being. To force the existence of non-existent things is a "much experienced habit" (*ethos polupeiron*),[29] while its refutation "had many contests" (*poludēris elenkhos*)[30]. And the third way is "that on which mortals wander knowing nothing ... who believe that to be and not to be are the same and not the same".[31] In Greece, we cannot think or talk about this tradition, as it does not exist. But in India, the concept of Being as a cosmological principle has a decent Vedic ancestry.

In the *Sad-Vidyā* when Uddālaka finishes the ontological teaching in our first text, he says: "It was, indeed, this that they knew, those extremely wealthy and immensely learned householders of old."[32] Of course, this may be just to enhance the authenticity of the doctrine – we have no proof of its actual existence before Āruṇi. On the other hand, when he talks about the opponents' view, we are on safer ground. "Of this some said – only the Non-existent was this [world?] in the beginning, one only without a second: from that Non-existent was born the Existent."[33] Exactly this view is found in the *Taittirīya-Upaniṣad* (II.7.1): "[The] Non-existent was this in the beginning. Thence was born the Existent." Similarly in an earlier chapter of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, with some admixture of the third way: "only the Non-existent was this in the beginning. That became [/was] the Existent. That

---

[24] *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* IV.9–11, translation based on Olivelle (1998: 393–395). (Verse 11 occurs with small variation in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* IV.4.19.)

[25] Markedly the frequently cited fr. 3., *to gar auto noein estin te kai einai*, most easily understood as "for it is the same to think and to be", and indeed all our sources interpret it that way. However, it can also mean that "the same thing can be thought of and can exist" (Bodnár–Klima–Ruzsa 1986: 288 = Bodnár 1990: 62).

[26] Fr. 2.7–8; translation: Coxon (1986: 52).

[27] If, however, Parmenides did mean to say that the Existent is essentially a conscious entity, then he was perfectly consonant with the Upaniṣads; indeed the canonical attribute of the Absolute will be *sat-cit-ānanda*, 'existence, consciousness and bliss.' Some early Upaniṣadic examples: "Brahman is mind (*manas*)" (*Chāndogya* III.18.1), "Brahman is understanding (*prajñā*)" (*Aitareya* III.3). In the *Sad-Vidyā,* the Existent is also the Self (text 2), and in text 1 the origin of the phenomena is that the Existent "*thought* to itself: 'Let me become many. Let me propagate myself.'" (VI.2.3, translation: Olivelle 1998: 247.)

[28] *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* VIII.1.2.7; for further examples see Mehlig (1987: 159–164).

[29] Fr. 7.3.

[30] Fr. 7.5.

[31] Fr. 6.4–5, 8–9; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 247).

[32] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.4.5; translation: Olivelle (1998: 249).

[33] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.2.1.

came to be."[34] And the view appears even earlier, in the Brāhmaṇas: "[The] Non-existent was this in the beginning. Of that it was said: What was that Non-existent? The Non-existent was, indeed, those seers."[35]

The earliest extant example of Being as a cosmogonical principle is in the *Ṛg-Veda*, again closer to the third way: "There was not the non-existent nor the existent then; there was not the air nor the heaven which is beyond."[36] But even this text refers to previous thinkers[37] on the subject: "Sages seeking in their hearts with wisdom found out the bond[38] of the existent in the non-existent."[39]

In general, the paradoxical "third way" seems to have been very popular in unorthodox circles. In many dialogues of the Buddha four alternatives are suggested (*catuṣ-koti*), as all of them possible: A, non-A, A and non-A, neither A nor non-A. This comes very close to Parmenides' characterisation quoted above; e.g. when Māluṅkyāputta asks the Buddha whether "the Tathāgata *is* after dying, the Tathāgata is not after dying, the Tathāgata both is and is not after dying, the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying."[40]

The characteristic Jaina 'doctrine of maybe' (*syād-vāda*) increases the number of options to seven by combining *is*, *is not* and *inexpressible*. Although this scholastic formulation may be quite late, but allowing contradictory answers from different viewpoints (*naya*s) seems to be a very old part of the system.[41] And finally, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, probably an older contemporary of the Buddha and the Jina, reiterates all positions, rejecting them all: I do not think that A, and I do not think that non-A, etc., and I do not deny that etc.[42]

3. The Existent and its attributes

The Absolute, the final ground of everything is called by Parmenides *to eon*, the Existent. This concept is labelled in the Upaniṣads in many ways, the most frequent and later canonised name being Brahman ('magic, spell'). Though the Upaniṣads in general contain many heterogeneous doctrines, the parts dealing with the Absolute do have a certain unity; their central teaching is the identity of Brahman, the essence of the Universe with the Self, the essence of the individual. This is strikingly

---

34 *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* III.19.1.

35 *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* VI.1.1.1. – And again in the *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa* II.2.9.1, "In the beginning this was nothing: there was no sky, no earth, no air. And that, being merely nonexistent, made up its mind: Let me be!"

36 ṚV X.129.1, translation: Macdonell (1917: 207. – The *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* adds the most interesting commentary: "It was thought [or mind: *manas*] only ... for thought is not exactly [*nêva*] existent and not exactly non-existent." X.5.3.1.

37 Clearly different from the author of X.129, as their position is criticised as one-sided: "Their [measuring-]cord was stretched horizontally. Was there below? Was there above?" X.129.5, translation based on Macdonell (1917: 210).

38 This word, *bandhu*, normally means relation, relative, companion; 'bond' would be *bandha* in Sanskrit.

39 X.129.4, translation: Macdonell (1917: 209). – Actually there is another, less philosophic and probably earlier reference to Being: "In the earliest age of the gods, the existent was born from the non-existent." ṚV X.72.1, translation based on O'Flaherty (1981: 38).

40 *Cūla-Māluṅkya-Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya* 63, tr. Horner (1957: 97).

41 See e.g. Frauwallner (1953–56: 199–201).

42 See e.g. Barua (1921: 325–332). He is normally labelled a sceptic. The most important original source is in the *Dīgha Nikāya, Sāmañña-phala Sutta* (*Sañcaya-Belaṭṭhaputta-vādo* = DN I.179–181; PTS ed. Vol. I. pp. 58–59).

formulated by saying "I am Brahman",[43] and finds its most beautiful mystical expression in the *Śāndilya-vidyā* part of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*.[44]

This basic unity justifies the procedure followed here, i.e. that frequently attributes of the Absolute under different names will be cited as parallels to the Parmenidean *sēmata*. But of course whenever possible we start with the *Sad-Vidyā*, which is the only continuous Upaniṣad passage that calls the Absolute *sat*, the Existent. This word, accidentally, is not only semantically and syntactically analogous to Greek *eon*, but they are also etymologically equivalent, both being derived from an Indo-European **(e)sont*.

The "signs" of the Existent are discussed by Parmenides in a strictly logical way in his longest extant fragment, fr. 8.

(1) The Existent is ungenerated,

> For what birth will you seek for it? How and whence did it grow? I shall not allow you to say nor to think from not being: for it is not to be said nor thought that it is not; and what need would have driven it later rather than earlier, beginning from the nothing, to grow?[45]

The first argument is very close to Uddālaka's statement:

> Only the Existent was this [world?] in the beginning, one only without a second. Of this some said – only the Non-existent was this in the beginning, one only without a second: from that Non-existent was born the Existent. But indeed, my son, whence could it be then? he said. How could existent be born from non-existent?[46]

Again not only the logic but also the wording is related: the use of rhetorical questions, the same interrogatives (how and whence: *pēi pothen – kutas, katham*: again etymologically related), and most notably the concept of birth (instead of origin; Greek *gen-* and Sanskrit *jan-* are developments of the same Indo-European root).

The second argument (lack of sufficient reason) is found in India only much later and in a more general form in the classical texts of the Sāṁkhya philosophy. This evidence is circumstantial, but not completely irrelevant, as the earliest roots of this school can be found exactly in our text and the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*.[47] The *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* (fourth century CE?) when proves the *sat-kārya-vāda*, the theory that an effect must have an existent cause, says: "Because the non-existent does not act; ... because not everything comes to be ... therefore [the effect] is the effect of an existent."[48] The first point is something of a tautology, presupposing the Buddhist definition of existence: *artha-kriyā-kāritva*, 'being the agent of an action',[49] and in its logical strictness parallels Parmenides; while the

---

[43] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* I.4.10

[44] "This self (*ātman*) of mine that lies deep within my heart – it is smaller than a grain of rice or barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller even than a millet grain or a millet kernel; but it is larger than the earth, larger than the intermediate region, larger than the sky, larger even than all these worlds put together. ... It is Brahman." (*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* III.14.3–4; tr. Olivelle 1998: 209.)

[45] Fr. 8.6–10; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 249).

[46] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.2.1–2.

[47] And to some extent in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad. See e.g. Chakravarti (1951: 11–41).

[48] *asad-akaraṇāt ... sarva-sambhavâbhāvāt ... sat-kāryam. Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* 9.

[49] Dasgupta (1922: 163); he translates it as "causal efficiency" or "efficiency of causing any action or event." This meaning is demonstrable perhaps only in Ratnakīrti (ca. 950), but he considers this the universally accepted definition of existence.

second is a generalisation of his second argument. That focused specifically on the time-aspect; but as the non-existent lacks any definition, anything could come out of it anywhere at any time.[50]

The Existent is also imperishable, but no specific arguments are given.[51] In the Upaniṣads *akṣara* (indestructible), *avyaya* (undecaying), *amara* (undying), *amṛta* (immortal) are frequent epithets of the Absolute.[52] That no need for extra proof was felt by either author is probably explained by the symmetry of origination and destruction, as their frequent mentioning together suggests. Uddālaka, in fact, seems to believe in a much stricter relation (later fairly generally accepted in India): whatever a thing originates from, into that will it return when destroyed. At least in the not perfectly coherent physiological theory he seems to suggest that at death a man's components return to the element from which they were taken.[53]

(2) The next *sēma* is closely related to the first; indeed, their exposition is not at all separate. "It never was nor will be, since it is now, all together" "And how could what is be in the future? How could it come to be? For if it came into being, it is not: nor is it if it is ever going to be in the future."[54] Although the construal of the second quotation is problematic (Coxon 1986: 202–203), the minimal meaning of this *sign* is that the Existent is not a past or future state of the world, but it is so right now. On the face of it this may seem as a rebuttal of Āruṇi's "in the beginning" (past); and in several places he says also that after death every creature will merge into the Existent (future).[55] However this is rather a characterisation of the phenomenal world: the Existent itself is not past or future only, but also present. This is clearly emphasised by the ever-recurrent refrain of the second text: "This finest essence – the whole universe has it as its Self: That is the Real: That is the Self: That *you* are, Śvetaketu!"[56]

A stronger meaning of the Parmenidean *oude pot' ēn oud' estai* would be to suggest the atemporality of the Existent: it has never been, it will never be – because it has only an eternal present: it *is*. Instead of speculating on the plausibility of this interpretation (although it may be remarked that it is arrogance to underestimate the thinking powers of our great ancestors), a parallel thought and wording will be quoted from the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*: *anyatra bhūtāc ca bhavyāc ca yat*, "other than what

---

[50] This is explicit both in the commentary *Jaya-Maṅgalā* and in the much later classical reformulation, the *Sāṁkhya-Sūtra* I.116.

[51] Unless in fr. 8.12 ("Nor will the force of conviction allow anything besides it to come to be ever from <not> being") we emend *ek mē eontos* to *ek tou eontos*.

[52] E. g. *akṣara* in *Kaṭha* III.2 (immediately before the chariot-simile quoted); *avyaya* in *Kaṭha* III.15 (together with *nitya*, eternal), *amara* in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* IV.4.25 ("And this is the immense and unborn self, unaging, undying, immortal, free from fear – the Brahman", Olivelle (1998: 127), *amṛta* in *Chāndogya* VIII.3.4–5 ("It is the Self ... it is immortal, free from fear: it is Brahman. And this Brahman has a name, Real (*satyam*). And these are those three syllables (*akṣara*): *sat-ti-yam*; there what is *sat* (existent), that is immortal...")

[53] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.5–7; 8.6; 15.

[54] Fr. 8.5, 19–20; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 249–50).

[55] All these belong to the second text: VI.8.6, 9, 10, 15.

> Now, take the bees, son. They prepare honey by gathering nectar from a variety of trees and by reducing that nectar to a homogeneous whole. In that state the nectar from each different tree is not able to differentiate: "I am the nectar of that tree", and "I am the nectar of this tree". In exactly the same way, son, when all these creatures merge into the existent, they are not aware that: "We are merging into the existent." No matter what they are in this world – whether it is a tiger, a lion, a wolf, a boar, a worm, a moth, a gnat, a mosquito – they all merge into that. (VI.9.1–3; tr. Olivelle 1998: 253.)

[56] VI.8–15; R.C. Zaehner's translation in Goodall (1996: 137–140).

was and what will be".[57] This passage clearly refers to atemporality, as it continues a description that suggests that the Absolute is beyond predication (or dualities).[58]

(3) The existent is "one, continuous"; "whole and of a single kind".

> Nor is it divided, since it all exists alike; nor is it more here and less there, which would prevent it from holding together, but it is all full of being. So it is all continuous: for the existent draws near to the existent. …
>
> For it needs must not be somewhat more or somewhat less here or there. For neither is there non-existent, which would stop it from reaching its like, nor is the existent in such a way that there would be more being here, less there, since it is all inviolate.[59]

The uniqueness of the Absolute is something of a commonplace in the Upaniṣads; Āruṇi starts his teaching with its declaration: "Only the Existent was this [world?] in the beginning, one only without a second." But the proof of Parmenides is unknown in India. Neither the logical analysis (the predicate 'to be' is incapable of degrees), nor the spatial (even geometrical) image of the Existent would be at home there.[60] Much later the concept of indivisibility (*abheda*) will be widely accepted and 'partless' (*akhaṇḍa*) will be a standard adjective of Brahman.

But in a less formal way the connection of homogeneity with oneness is suggested by the simile of the bees (see fn. 55), more literally translated: the bees "send the juice to oneness (*ekatā*). They do not get distinction there." Some reflections in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*[61] show an awareness of the connection between universality and non-duality, or between separation and duality: "when there is a duality of some kind, then one can see the other ... But when all has become his very self, what could he see and with what?" (IV.5.15) "It does not see ... there is no second, other than it, separate, that it could see." (IV.3.23)

The attribute "whole" has no exact counterpart in Sanskrit. *Sarva* (whole, all) typically occurs in contexts like *sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma*,[62] that could be translated "This Brahman is, indeed, whole", but more naturally as "All this [world] is Brahman". *Pūrṇa* (full, whole), though not very frequent,[63] is important as being the focus of the famous invocation of the *Īśā-Upaniṣad*:

That [Brahman] is whole, this [world] is whole.
From the whole rises a whole.

---

[57] *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* II.14; the referent is clearly Brahman (II.16), grasped in the form of the mystical *OM* syllable.

[58] The whole stanza runs: "Tell me that which thou seest beyond right and wrong, beyond what is done or not done, beyond past and future." (Translation: Radhakrishnan 1953: 614.) Śaṅkara's commentary is also clear: "*other than what was*: than past time; *and what will be*: and future; also [other] than present. The meaning is: what is not limited [or divided, *paricchidyate*] by the three times."

[59] Fr. 8.6, 4, 22–25, 44–48; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 248–53). (With minimal modifications: *what is* in line 25 was changed to *the existent*; *is it* in line 46 to *is there* and *is it existent* in line 47 to *is the existent.*)

[60] However, the omnipresence of the Absolute can be expressed locally; e.g., Āruṇi illustrates that the Existent is everywhere, though unseen, by making Śvetaketu sip from the middle and two ends of a pan of salt water: though the dissolved salt is invisible and intangible, it is present everywhere in the water (*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.13).

[61] The teaching of this Upaniṣad is very closely related to, but clearly later than, that of the *Sad-Vidyā.* Also the central philosopher of the text, Yājñavalkya was a contemporary (most probably also a pupil) of Uddālaka Āruṇi (Bronkhorst 2007: 226–227)

[62] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* III.14.1

[63] In the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* occurs only in III.12.9, *pūrṇaṁ apravarti*, whole and unmoving (said of Brahman as the outer space and the space within the heart). Similarly in *Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad* IV.8.

Taking a whole of the whole,
still a whole remains.[64]

The adjective 'inviolate' (*asulon*) recalls the wording of the very important, four times recurring passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*: "It is the *not, not* Self: ungraspable ... cannot be hurt ... unattached ... unbound ... does not tremble ... is not injured (*na riṣyati*)."[65]

(4) The Absolute does not move, it is "unshaken" (cf. the previous quotation from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*).

> But changeless within the limits of great bonds it exists without beginning or ceasing, since coming to be and perishing have wandered very far away, and true conviction has thrust them off. Remaining the same and in the same place it lies on its own.[66]

Actually 'immovable'[67] or 'motionless'[68] seem to be more exact for *akinēton* than 'changeless'. Parmenides' proof is not very clear here, but he probably thought along these lines: if the Existent moves, it moves to where it was not before; and in that place the non-existent changes to existent, and that is coming to be – but that has already been rejected.

In the early Indian texts the immobility, though usually taken for granted, is seldom expressed.[69] The classical epithets appear only a little later, e.g. in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*: "eternal, omnipresent, stable, unmoving (*acala*), everlasting" (II.24).

(5) The Existent in the Parmenidean poem seems to be limited and globular.

> For strong Necessity holds it within the bonds of a limit, which keeps it on every side. …
>
> But since there is a furthest limit, it is perfected, like the bulk of a ball well-rounded on every side, equally balanced in every direction from the centre.[70]

It is debated whether this description should be taken literally, and, if the answer is yes, whether Parmenides was following Xenophanes who probably[71] described his one god as spherical. In any case all this stands in strong contrast with standard Indian thinking, where the world usually has no end, the spatial aspect of the Absolute is not emphasised, and the frequent attribute *ananta* (infinite) is not normally understood in a temporal sense only.[72]

---

[64] Found also in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* V.1.1.

[65] III.9.26, IV.2.4, 4.22, 5.15.

[66] Fr. 8.4, 26–29; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 248, 251).

[67] Sellmer (1998: 107): "unverrückbar."

[68] Barnes (1979: 179) and Steiger (1985: 10) ("mozdulatlan"). But Barnes (1979: 220) remarks that "*Kinēsis* in philosophical Greek regularly carries wider connotations than 'motion' in English: it covers any form of change".

[69] E.g. *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* III.17.6 *acyuta* 'unmoved', *Īśā-Upaniṣad* 4 *anejat* 'not stirring' and *sthita* 'standing'.

[70] Fr. 8.30–31, 42–44; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 251–252).

[71] Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 170, fn. 1).

[72] E.g. in the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*, III.15: "undecaying ... eternal ... without beginning, without end, beyond the great, stable", where *mahataḥ param* (beyond the great) suggest spatial infinity and, further, temporal infinity has been mentioned before separately (*avyayam, nityam*: undecaying, eternal). Contrast the specifically temporal *anarkhon apauston* of Parmenides in fr. 8.27: "without beginning or ceasing", while spatially limited: "within the limits of great bonds" (8.26).

4. The world of phenomena

The most conspicuous parallelism – and also a marked difference between our texts can be found in the relation of the Existent and the phenomena. What we normally perceive is only *names*, contrasted with the deeper, metaphysical *truth*; and the intermediaries between those two worlds are called *forms*. But the differences are also significant: Parmenides has two forms, belonging to the *doxa*, while Āruṇi (in the first text) speaks about three forms, and they belong to the sphere of truth.

> All those things will be name, which mortals fixed, believing them to be true: coming to be and perishing, to be and not to be, and to change place and to exchange their bright colour. …
>
> Men have fixed a name for them, as an emblem for each.[73]
>
> They fixed two forms to name their cognitions: … all have been named Light and Night.[74]

These are Parmenides' ideas on naming and truth; let us compare Āruṇi's expressions:

> As by one nail-cutter everything made of iron can be known, the modification being only a name arising from speech while the truth is that it is just iron. …
>
> What is red form in the fire, that is the form of Light; what is white, of Water; what is black, of Food. The fire-ness of fire has gone away, the modification being only a name arising from speech while the truth is that it is just the three forms.[75]

Both texts call the phenomena very clearly (using examples) *names*,[76] suggesting that they are *mere* names, and therefore not true or real (*alēthes* / *satyam*). This is traditionally understood as stating that the world as we see it is unreal.[77] Interestingly this interpretation should be rejected in both cases and for similar reasons: the contrast is not between truth and false appearance, but between unchanging, final, absolute and reliable reality and fleeting, subjective and doubtful experience.[78] The admittedly strikingly strong Parmenidean words on mortal opinion ("in which there is no true reliance", described by "deceitful ordering of words"[79]) do not mean anything more than that the *doxa*

---

[73] Fr. 8.38–41, 19.3 (in 8.38 reading *pant' onom' estai*).

[74] 8.53, 9.1. The standard translation of 8.53 ("they made up their minds to name two forms") could have been easily expressed, without violating the hexameter, by exchanging the order of *morphē* and *gnōmē*: **gnōmas gar katethento duo morphas onomazein*. In the other two occurrences of this verb, in 8.39 and 19.3, it always has this form, *katethento*; the subject is mortals or people (*brotoi, anthrōpoi*); and the object is names (*onoma*). Therefore, it seems that the technical meaning of *katatithemai* for Parmenides is 'to postulate, settle/fix for oneself'; I rendered it with 'to fix'. *Gnōmē* in 8.61 means 'opinion, judgement, thought', i.e. what is in the head; here, before the first naming, a non-propositional word was needed – I picked 'cognition'.

[75] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.1.6, 4.1; the translation of the refrain *vācārambhanaṁ vikāro nāma-dheyam, XX ity eva satyam* follows Radhakrishnan (1953: 447).

[76] It might be worthy of a remark, that the worlds used for naming (*onoma katethento* / *nāma-dheya*) both use the same Indo-European words (the verb is **dhē*, to put).

[77] "It could hardly be stated more plainly that the Way of Opinion is a Way of Falsity ... Nor, after all, is it unusual for a philosopher to describe, at length, views with which he vehemently disagrees." (Barnes 1979: 156.) Deussen (1921: 156) remarks on Āruṇi: "This is the oldest passage in which the unreality of the manifold world is expressed. Not long after this, Parmenides in Greece attained to the same knowledge and uttered it almost in the same way..."

[78] A more detailed argument can be found on Parmenides in Bodnár–Klima–Ruzsa (1986: 294) = Bodnár (1990: 73–75). The original meaning of Uddālaka's *vācârambhana*-refrain, unearthed from under the classical reinterpretation of Śaṅkara is suggested in Ruzsa (2004: 234 = Chapter IV: 45): "The designation is the specific modification, as the (first) grasping by language; only 'clay' is (constant) truth." I.e., though we first (or normally) designate things by their form, the material is constant, while the form is transient. We say, "This is a cup or spoon", not that "This is metal". However, when we melt it, the metal will still be there, but the cup will be gone.

[79] Fr. 1.30, 8.52; translation: Kirk–Raven–Schofield (1983: 242, 254).

is not necessary, logical truth; it is but the best description of the world based on perception. Therefore it is unreliable, and if it appears as certain truth, then it also deceives.[80]

The apparent contradiction in Parmenides is rather the result of a literary device, emphasising the difference of *doxa* and *alētheia* in sharply contrasting words. When he says that there is no coming to be and destruction, movement and change or even difference, he denies these to the existent *as existent.* But when a dog dies, it dies *as a dog*, not as an existent: its carcass will still be there. There is no contradiction between movement and rest in the same locus, if viewed from a different angle: a man may sit perfectly motionless, still his thoughts, his blood, his heart and his eyes will move.

Parmenides clearly suggests that the perceptible word and the Existent are identical (or co-extensive – they occupy the same space). The wording of 8.24 and 9.3 is intentionally similar: *pan d' empleon estin eontos – pan pleon estin homou phaeos kai nuktos aphantou*, all is full of the Existent – all is full of Light and invisible Night.[81] Actually the relation is triple: the Existent – the two forms – the empirical objects; and as a totality all three are identical. In the extant fragments the objects' similar status to that of the forms is noticeable in fr. 19, where the same idiom (people have fixed a name for them) is used for the phenomena as before for the two forms.

The same relation obtains between the Existent, the three forms and the objects in the *Sad-Vidyā*: they are coextensive. The three forms are the reality behind the different phenomena (fire, sun, moon, lightning and, indeed, anything);[82] the Existent is the root of the three forms and of all creatures;[83] and in the recurrent refrain of the second text the Existent is the self of everything.[84]

The difference in the ontological status of the Greek and the Indian *forms* is important, but not as sharp as it appears at first sight. In the first text Āruṇi says that "only *the three forms* is truth",[85] so while in Parmenides the forms belong to the *doxa*, here they are part of the metaphysical truth. But in the refrain of the second text Uddālaka says of the Absolute, "that is truth", and the forms are not mentioned. While in the simile of the introduction, even "iron" is truth, as compared to the name "nail-cutter". And that means that in the *Chāndogya* the opposition name–truth (or convention–reality) is only relative, starting with everyday objects and going higher and higher up until the Existent. In an absolute sense, of course, only the Absolute can be called unchanging truth; and that is the usage of the second text. So in Parmenides we find only a stricter usage, no doubt motivated by the different epistemological status: for him, the attributes of the Existent are deducible, and therefore logically necessary – so truth (and also necessity, *anankē*; but cf. fr. 10. 6) is appropriate only here.

It is interesting to speculate on the terminology of the fundamental elements of the physical world. They are called forms (*morphē, rūpa*) and that is a little surprising. An important philosophical concept first appears on the stage, and does not play its own proper role! Form should be contrasted to matter, but here the forms are the fundamental material constituents of the world. We could try to

---

[80] Unless we emend the deceitful *apatēlon* to the unusual *apatēton*, 'untrodden' with Popper (1998: 100).

[81] Steiger (1986: 208) and Steiger (1985: 118–119) clearly notices this and draws the right conclusions, although he expresses this rather differently: he says that Parmenides boldly accepts the incompatibility of these two aspects of the world.

> [D]iese Denker über die Widersprüchlichkeit der beiden Welten reflektierten und sich doch auch zu ihrer Unlösbarkeit bekannten. … [D]as Verhältnis von *eon* und *morphē* zueinander… : das homogene des Kugeluniversums und die zweigestaltige der physischen Welt sind zwei inkompatible Aspekte derselben Entität des Teils. (Steiger 1986: 203 and 208).

[82] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.4

[83] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.8.4,6

[84] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.8–16.

[85] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.4.1–4,6

explain the problem away saying that they are forms of the Existent; that would be acceptable, but there is nothing in the texts to suggest it.

But in the *Chāndogya* we have some clues. "What is red form in the fire, that is the form of Light..."[86] – here the other meaning of *rūpa*, 'colour' is evident.[87] So the forms appear to be first "the visible aspect" of each basic component of the word; and then the meaning secondarily extended to the components themselves.

Far more informative is the term *nāma-rūpa* (name and form). In the *Sad-Vidyā* it occurs only in the spurious third *khaṇḍa*, but name (e.g. fire) is contrasted with the three forms also in the fourth *khaṇḍa*. The concept of *nāma-rūpa* is old and vague,[88] but the basic intuition is probably the diversity of the word as named (conceptual: genera) and as seen (perceptual: individuals). In fact in Buddhist philosophical language *rūpa* means body or matter.[89] So here also *rūpa* would mean 'perceptual or empirical aspect' or even 'matter'.

The actual forms are quite different in our authors, but there are common points as well. Parmenides has "Light", "the aetherial Fire of Flame, gentle, very light" and "unknowing Night, a solid and heavy body".[90] Uddālaka's first *rūpa* is *tejas*, 'light, heat, energy'; its colour is red. Then follows water, white and food, black. Clearly here we have a contrast solid–liquid–fiery. He also uses the concept of weight, although differently: he produces different parts of humans from the heavy, medium and light parts of the *rūpa*s consumed. Both set of forms have temporal overtones: night and day for Parmenides, hot / rainy / harvest season for Āruṇi;[91] both the year and the day can represent a full circle in time.

The classical successor of the *rūpa*-theory is the three *guṇa*s, 'qualities' of Sāṁkhya.[92] The age of the details is uncertain, but some further similarities are noteworthy. The last *guṇa* is called *tamas*, 'darkness'; actually *tamas* is a very old cosmogonical principle, appearing already in the *R̥g-Veda*.[93] The *guṇa*s are bunches of qualities just like the *morphai*: the first, *sattva* ('essence') is kind,[94] light and illuminating; *rajas* ('atmosphere') is hostile, activating, supporting and fickle; *tamas* is depressing, restraining, heavy and covering.[95] Just dropping *rajas*, the principle of strife, activity, energy from the picture we get something very close to the Parmenidean arrangement.

The forms are not exactly like the usual elements, inasmuch as they do not normally appear singly, like fire, earth etc., but everything[96] is a mixture of all of them. "All is full of Light and

---

[86] *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* VI.4.1

[87] Actually, it is not a different meaning, but a different translation of the same meaning, for which we have no word: 'visible quality'.

[88] See Mehlig (1987: 174–178).

[89] And *nāma-rūpa* 'individual, person'.

[90] Fr. 9.1, 8.56–57, 59.

[91] van Buitenen (1957: 91–92).

[92] This has been doubted, but see Ruzsa (1997: 69–70) or van Buitenen (1957: 95).

[93] E.g. R̥V X.129.4: "There was darkness hidden by darkness in the beginning."

[94] *prīti-...-ātmakam,* 'has joy/kindness/love as its essence'.

[95] *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* 12–13. Here it is not specifically mentioned, but *sattva* is also principle of knowledge, *rajas* of passion and *tamas* of ignorance.

[96] According to Parmenides this is probably not true for the extremities of the world – in fr. 12.1 *pur akrēton*, "unmixed fire", or perhaps of heavenly bodies: "the pure torch of the sun" (10.2–3) and the moon, which is called *allotrion phōs*, "a light belonging to another" [i.e. the sun] (14.).

invisible Night together, of both equally”,[97] says Parmenides, and in the *Chāndogya* even the fire and the sun have some admixture of Water and Food.

5. Differences between Parmenides and the Indian tradition

So far we have seen that most elements of the Parmenidean philosophy could be borrowings from India, especially from the VI. chapter of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*. Now we should consider the differences.

Two important traits of the *Sad-Vidyā* (second text) are missing from the Parmenidean account. Uddālaka clarifies the relation of the Existent to the everyday world, and also to the subject. The Existent is present everywhere, though invisible and intangible, like the lump of salt dissolved in a pan of water; and it is the essence not only of the material world, but “that is the Self: you are that, Śvetaketu!” (VI.13.) Now Parmenides either did not know the second text (that is quite compatible with our thesis), or the omission was intentional.[98] Probably he made the gulf separating the Absolute and the empirical so much wider; or he may have thought, like the Buddhists, that the Self is in fact our changing psyche, not the constant Being under it.

There are also two really significant innovations in Parmenides: logic and the number of forms. The logical way of exposition has nothing parallel to it in India (nor in Greece); that seems to be Parmenides’ greatest contribution. In a sense he was forced to do that: in India the thinking about the Absolute already had a lengthy and respectable tradition, so a thinker could add to its description simply saying “it is so”, or “ancient seers knew it so”. This was clearly less viable with a Greek audience – argumentation was needed; and Parmenides was able to supply it. Of course the presence of logical demonstration should not make us blind to the transcendent source of his teaching – the divine revelation was probably not mere literary fiction. It was meant also to supply a little of the elevated status and traditional weight, missing in Greece, of the teaching about the Absolute.

Once he had perfected his demonstrations, he had to realise that their force cannot be extended beyond the Existent; they cannot reach even the forms, not to speak of everyday phenomena. This forced him to emphasise the demarcation – absolute, unchanging and definitely knowable Existent on the one side, changing and not fully reliable experience on the other. This made their relation less transparent, causing much misunderstanding among his interpreters. But it also gave him more freedom to reconsider the forms and their relation to the world.

Neither Greek, nor Indian tradition had a very strong predilection for any particular number of basic elements. E.g. in the Sāṁkhya philosophy we have two: soul and matter; three: the *guṇa*s; five: the elements; and 25, the *tattva*s (factors: the elements, senses etc.) So Parmenides decided here not to follow Āruṇi, but to find the theoretically best system, i.e. – applying Occam’s razor – the minimal system of two different principles. In selecting a pair of opposites, Night and Light, he was following Indian as well as Greek examples (in Hesiod they come very early in the history of the gods). But by

---

[97] Fr. 9.3–4. (reading *ison*; on the standard *isōn* we could translate line 4 as “... of both, that are equal, because neither has a share of Nothing”).

[98] Alternatively, the problematic fr. 1.31–32 may refer to the first relation: the opinions/phenomena (*ta dokounta*) are acceptable because they reach everything (*panta*: the objects) through the All (*dia pantos*: the Existent). If *ta dokounta* stands for the two forms, this could mean that the three spheres pervade each other. However, I think it more probable that Parmenides here suggests that his natural philosophy is better than other theories because it grows out of (and is coherent with) the teaching about the Existent.

dropping the third *guṇa* of Sāṁkhya, he lost the principle of movement; his disciple, Empedocles had to re-introduce it as love and strife.

6. Conclusions

Having finished the comparisons, some questions must be answered, in order. First about the nature of the parallels noted. Do they prove borrowing, or can they be accidental?

To my mind even the sheer amount of correspondences seems to be decisive, but we have something more compelling here. A similarity can be accidental; and there is a probability to such coincidence. This probability cannot be measured or calculated exactly, but it can be estimated. If we find a motif in a randomly selected group of 100 philosophers, say, twice, then we could say that its probability is around 2%. (Obviously we should filter for dependencies such as schools, but it is not that important here.)

Now I am proposing some probabilities (that I trust are higher than the actual ones) for three motifs: a) An eternal, omnipresent Absolute that has its only designation as 'the Existent': 2%. b) The fundamental *material* components of the world are called 'forms':[99] 1%. c) The opposition phenomenal–essential is expressed as "name–truth": 1%. For what follows it is extremely important that these motifs are completely independent from each other – the acceptance of one would not make anyone more inclined to adopt another. If I call my Absolute 'Being', I can still name my elements roots, sources, parts, components, divinities, stuffs, beginnings or whatever; indeed, I can very easily go without any teaching on the elements. And similarly in all the other combinations.

This all means that the probability of their co-occurrence can be calculated with the standard methods of probability theory, and the result is 0.000002. That means roughly that we may expect to find a second thinker sharing these motifs among half a million philosophers. Now, were there that many?

Or, to put it in other words: if we select our texts to compare on the basis of the first motif only (as I did), there is 0.01% probability (a chance of 1 : 10,000) to find the other two as well. And such a remote possibility can safely be excluded – we may distinctly assert that our two texts cannot be independent.

The second question is whether there was direct borrowing or some more complicated relation is probable. Already in the introduction it has been shown that common heritage is out of the question. Some intermediary (Persians, Magi) is theoretically possible, but highly improbable. The complexities of the ideas involved necessitate that the bearer should be a philosopher himself, and we do not know of any philosophy anywhere except in Greece, India and China. Also a second translation could lead to more loss of information. And a direct contact could explain many of the parallelisms with texts other than the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*. Occam's razor also points in the same direction. Instead of a man going somewhere to learn, returning home and then writing a book (not an unusual scenario) – we would have man 1 going somewhere to learn, then going to somewhere else far away to teach man 2, who would then write the book.

The third question is, naturally, who borrowed. Both texts stand so far apart from anything around them,[100] that an external influence seems inherently possible. But as we could show above for all

---

[99] I.e. shapes (and colours), not meaning 'kind of'.

[100] For Parmenides this is very well known. On the *Sad-Vidyā* Frauwallner (1953–56: 72) may be quoted:

common elements – notably for the terminology *existent, forms, name* – that they have clearly traceable roots and kinship in India, while not in Greece, it is practically clear that it was Parmenides who imported Indian ideas. Also the differences can be seen as the result of an attempt at improvement, or at least adaptation to the Greek soil, by Parmenides. (That, however, does not exclude the possibility of Parmenides also influencing Uddālaka Āruṇi, who is in several texts represented as quite unusually willing to learn, and even from non-orthodox sources.[101])

Our last question is: was it possible at all? Why and how could it happen? Chronologically we cannot really say much. According to Olivelle (1998: 12) the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya*, the earliest of the Upaniṣads, should be placed in the sixth to fifth centuries BCE, "give or take a century or so."[102] Parmenides composed his poem around 480, so we cannot know which text is older. Both authors are known to have travelled even at a fairly advanced age.[103] When Parmenides was young, the city of his fathers (Phōkaia) and Gandhāra, mentioned by Āruṇi, both belonged to the same empire. And Darius took great care that his satrapies should be easily reached. His messengers travelled from Sousa to Sardeis on the Persian Royal Road in nine days; that would be about half of the distance to India. Of course a philosopher would not go that fast; starting from Elea in Southern Italy, it could take about half a year.

It was perfectly possible, but why would Parmenides attempt it? Most probably not to learn philosophy. But probably he was a physician[104] like his follower Empedocles, and he might have travelled to learn of new treatments and medicines. India has a strong old medical tradition, the *āyur-veda*; he could have heard of it (e.g. from the Indian soldiers fighting in Xerxes' army).

So the most probable scenario is that Parmenides travelled to India, learned Sanskrit (a language closely related to Greek) and came to know some Upaniṣadic philosophy. We cannot say exactly which texts, as the Upaniṣads as we have them are compound texts with many layers interwoven that are not of the same age. He could even have met Āruṇi or Śvetaketu, but we will never know. But he

...stands among the older Upaniṣads as completely sporadic and isolated. … It shows especially evidently how easily a judgement which blindly trusts the accidental character of tradition can easily go wrong and only takes into consideration the continuance of the text. Because, had not this one text remained preserved for us, nobody would have assumed or even conjectured a similar thought-process in this period.

[101]See e.g. the story of Śvetaketu, Jaivali Pravāhana and Uddālaka Āruṇi, especially in the version of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (VI.2; the other is in the *Chāndogya*, V.3–10).

[102]Actually, he says "seventh to sixth century", but in a footnote (fn. 21), he adds that if Bechert's dating of the Buddha is accepted, "then the dates of the early Upaniṣads should be pushed forward a century or so." And, like Olivelle himself, I accept Bechert's conclusions. Actually Japanese scholars have much earlier argued for ca. 386 BCE as the date of the Nirvāṇa, but it remained largely unnoticed in Europe; see Nakamura (1950–56: 33, n. 23).

Bronkhorst's (2007: 219–247) analysis of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* does not contradict this dating. The philosophically important part is pre-Pāṇinian (before ca. 350 BCE) although the text was added to perhaps even after Patañjali (150 BCE).

Although there are some passages in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* that seem to reflect the influence of the Buddha's (ca. 400 BCE) teaching, they are all related to the doctrine of karma. On the other hand, the Buddha repeatedly refers to the "mistaken" view that there is an unchanging universal entity into which people merge at death, and that is the characteristic doctrine of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* and the *Sad-Vidyā* we are concerned with.

[103]According to Plato, *Parmenides* 127b Parmenides visited Athens when he was about sixty-five. On the other hand, Śvetaketu is already and independent, grown-up person (say, twenty-five) when Āruṇi follows him to get instruction from different princes (*Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad* I., *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* VI.2, *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* V.3–10). At *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* III.7 he says that he had been living among the *Madra*s (in the Punjab); as he belonged to the Kuru-Pañcāla territory around Delhi, that must be about 1000 km to the west. In the *Sad-Vidyā* (VI.14), he mentions Gandhāra further west.

[104]The circumstantial evidence pointing in this direction is presented in Coxon (1986: 39–40).

surely knew some version of the teaching that we now find in the *Sad-Vidyā* (text 1) and many others of which at least fragments survive elsewhere – among them the second text of the *Sad-Vidyā* and the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*.

VI. The types of suffering in Buddhism

1. Duḥkha in the *Mahā-Vyutpatti*

It is a kind of mystery why Alexander Csoma de Kőrös never published[1] his edition and translation of the *Mahā-Vyutpatti*. It seems that he spent several years on the preparation of the text and that suggests that he was fully aware of the importance of this 9th-century Tibetan–Sanskrit Buddhist dictionary. It is an important tool for the "reconstruction" of lost Sanskrit originals and for the comparison of the Tibetan and Indian understanding of Buddhism.

There is a third aspect of the book, quite interesting in its own right that can be analysed from the Sanskrit part only. The *Mahā-Vyutpatti* is not organised alphabetically but conceptually: groups of related concepts are listed together and this shows their interrelation and/or structure in later Buddhist scholasticism.

In this chapter, I am going to review one such cluster of concepts, the types of *duḥkha*, and compare it to the same as it appears in early Buddhist scriptures.

The importance in Buddhism of *duḥkha*, 'suffering/frustration/unsatisfactoriness' of the whole human existence hardly needs elaboration. It is the starting point and basic premise of the Teaching; all the effort of the *bhikṣu* ('beggar', monk) goes to overcome it; and the great promise, the final goal is *nirvāṇa*, its complete blowing out. A detailed analysis of its role in the life of Gautama Siddhārtha, its interrelations with other fundamental tenets of the *dharma* or its relation to facts of history is beyond the scope of this study; an excellent summary can be found in Gombrich (1994: 54–59, 62–65).

Suffering appears as the theme of two successive groups in the *Mahā-Vyutpatti*, nos. CCXXVI - CCXXVII in Csoma de Kőrös (1984: 307–308) = 103–104 in his manuscript, 111–112 in Minayeff's and Sakaki's editions. The second group is the well-known characterisation of suffering from the Four Noble Truths as they are formulated in the Benares Sermon, the Turning of the Wheel of the Teaching (*Dhamma-Cakka-Ppavattana-Sutta*).[2] Suffering is here analysed as of eight kinds: birth, age, sickness, death, separation from the beloved, union with the disagreeable, not gaining of desires and finally the

[1] It appeared only in 1910–16 under the title "Sanskrit-Tibetan-English vocabulary: being an edition and translation of the Mahāvyutpatti", edited by E. Denison Ross and Satis Chandra Vidyābhūsana, published by the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

[2] On other formulations and especially on its possible original form see the classical analysis of Norman (1982).

five factors of clinging (*upādāna-skandhāḥ*).[3] This list was clearly not meant by the Buddha as a classification, it does not give distinct classes. A headache is a case of sickness; but at the same time, we are also separated from a pleasant state and joined to an unpleasant state; our wish to gain freedom from pain is frustrated; and it is a state of our body (which is the first *skandha*).

2. The three kinds of suffering

The first group, a triad, is less clear: *1. Duḥkha-duḥkhatā; 2. Saṁskāra-duḥkhatā; 3. Vipariṇāma-duḥkhatā.* In Csoma de Kőrös's rendering, they are "the pain of misery; the fancied misery or the consciousness of misery; the misery of change." These cannot be considered translations of the Sanskrit – even accepting the terminology we should say 'the misery of pain' and 'the misery of consciousness'. Moreover, it is far from evident that the notoriously vague *saṁskāra* here means anything like 'fancy' or 'consciousness'. Also, it is worth investigating into why we have here exactly these three. Why not, say, four?

It seems that it was something of a commonplace in classical India that there are three main kinds of suffering. The *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā*, an important short text from ca. the 4th century CE, starts with the very words *duḥkha-trayâbhighāta*, "the affliction of the triad of suffering". The commentaries[4] explain that the three kinds of suffering are *ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika, ādhidaivika*: internal (bodily and mental), related to other beings and dependent on higher powers.[5] This interpretation is not beyond doubt;[6] in the text itself, we find only *jarā-maraṇa-kṛtaṁ duḥkham*, "suffering caused by old age and death" (55. kārikā).

It is perhaps more to the point that the (probably a little earlier) *Yoga-Sūtra* says: *Pariṇāma-tāpa-saṁskāra-duḥkhair ... duḥkham eva sarvaṁ vivekinaḥ*, "Everything is suffering for the discriminating because of the suffering of change, pain and *saṁskāra*" (II.15). The commentators again take *saṁskāra* to be 'mental impression or karmic residue',[7] which is not implausible in this text; however this sentence looks more like a proverb than a sūtra proper, so perhaps our analysis of the older Buddhist texts will shed some light here as well. The peculiar wording typical to this formula, speaking of *duḥkhatā* ('miserableness, misery') instead of simply *duḥkha* (although not in the *Sūtra*, but in the *Bhāṣya*[8]) also suggests a close relation.[9]

---

3 That is, the mental and physical factors of human existence; see Rhys Davids and Stede (1993: 149 and esp. 233) and Edgerton (1993: 607 and esp. 145). A fresh approach is suggested by Gombrich (1997: 66–69) who underlines the importance of the metaphorical character of the expression ("bundle of fuel") and its relation to the fire-metaphor.

4 For example, *Gauḍapāda ad loc.: tatra duḥkha-trayaṁ – ādhy-ātmikaṁ, ādhi-bhautikaṁ ādhi-daivikaṁ cêti. tatrâdhy-ātmikaṁ dvi-vidhaṁ: śārīraṁ mānasaṁ cêti. śārīraṁ vāta-pitta-śleṣma-viparyaya-kṛtaṁ jvarâtīsārâdi...* "There the triad of suffering is: relating to oneself, relating to the creatures and relating to the gods. There 'relating to oneself' is of two kinds: bodily and mental. 'Bodily' is fever, dysentery, etc. caused by the abnormality of wind, bile and phlegm..."

5 The same analysis appears in the *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya ad Yoga-Sūtra* I.31, but the following unmistakable paraphrase (*yenâbhihatāḥ prāṇinas tad-apaghātāya prayatante tad duḥkham*, cf. *Sāṁkhya-kārikā* 1: *duḥkha-trayâbhighātāj jijñāsā tad-apaghātake hetau*) shows that this evidence is not an independent testimony.

6 It seems to depend on an old medical tradition preserved in the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā*. Cf. Ruzsa (1997a), Chapter IX and Ruzsa (1997: 27–35).

7 *kā punaḥ saṁskāra-duḥkhatā? sukhânubhavāt sukha-saṁskārâśayo duḥkhânubhavād api duḥkha-saṁskārâśaya iti. evaṁ karmabhyo vipāke 'nubhūyamāne sukhe duḥkhe vā punaḥ karmâśaya-pracaya iti.* "And what is the miserableness of *saṁskāra*? From the experience of happiness, a *saṁskāra* of happiness will be stored, from the experience of suffering a *saṁskāra* of suffering. And so from the *karma*s, when their fruition is experienced either as happiness or as suffering, again a storage of *karma* will be accumulated." (*Vyāsa-Bhāṣya ad loc.*)

8 *eṣā pariṇāma-duḥkhatā nāma ... atha kā tāpa-duḥkhatā? ... kā punaḥ saṁskāra-duḥkhatā?*

3. The Pāli Canon

The immediate source of the three kinds of suffering in the Pāli Canon seems to be Sāriputta's formulation of the teaching. The *locus classicus* is the *Saṅgīti-Sutta*; Sāriputta recites a long list of categories (at the Buddha's request) in Pāvā, after the death of the Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta, i.e. Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the Jina. No meaningful context – here we have just a list of triads. *Tisso dukkhatā – dukkha-dukkhatā, saṅkhāra-dukkhatā, vipariṇāma-dukkhatā*; "Three kinds of misery – the misery of suffering, the misery of *saṁskāra*, the misery of change."[10]

We have two similar passages in the *Saṁyutta-nikāya*;[11] in the first, Sāriputta answers the question of Jambukhādaka, a *parivrājaka* (wandering mendicant): "What is suffering?" In the second, the speaker is unspecified and here we have again a list of triads. In both cases the Noble Eightfold Path serves to recognise (and to know perfectly, to perfectly overcome and to reject) the three.

That our triad is not unconnected to that of the *Yoga-Sūtra* is corroborated by closer Pāli parallels. In the paracanonical *Paṭisambhidā-Magga* and also in the *Visuddhi-Magga* we read of four meanings of suffering: *pīḷana-saṅkhata-santāpa-vipariṇām'aṭṭhena vā dukkhaṁ ariya-saccaṁ*,[12] "the Noble Truth of Suffering [can be analysed] in the sense of oppression, compound, torment and change." So instead of the standard *dukkha-dukkhatā* we have two synonyms: *pīḷana* and *santāpa* ('affliction'), and the latter is almost identical with the *Yoga-Sūtra*'s *tāpa-duḥkha*. That the number is here four, not three, seems typical to the postcanonical literature: although they are fond of counting the types of suffering, they seem to be unconcerned about the exact number. Sometimes we find also lists of two or seven *dukkha*s.[13]

4. Pain, change, compositeness

Accidentally we also got a little closer to understanding the meaning of our terms. We found that *dukkha-dukkhatā* meant the most immediately felt, direct suffering; we could say 'pain'. Also, the

---

[9] Tandon (1995: 1–3) has already pointed out that the analysis of suffering in Yoga and in Buddhism is identical.

[10] *Dīgha-Nikāya*, III. Pāthika-vagga (10. (= 30.) *Saṅgīti-Sutta*, Tikam) 305. (PTS vol. III, p. 216)

[11] a) *Saṁyutta-Nikāya*, IV. Saḷāyatana-vagga (4. (= 38.) Jambukhādaka-saṁyutta, 14. *Dukkhapañhā-Sutta*) 327. (PTS IV. 259). In the village of Nālaka, in Magadha. *"'Dukkhaṁ, dukkhan' ti, āvuso Sāriputta, vuccati. Katamaṁ nu kho, āvuso, dukkhan" ti? – "Tisso imā, āvuso, dukkhatā. dukkha-dukkhatā, saṅkhāra-dukkhatā, vipariṇāma-dukkhatā…"*

b) *Saṁyutta-Nikāya,* V. Mahā-vagga ((= 45.) I. Magga-saṁyutta, 7. Esanā-vagga, 5. *Dukkhatā-Sutta*) 165. (PTS V. 56.) Of the circumstances we know only that the text belongs to the Sāvatthi tradition. *"Tisso imā, bhikkhave, dukkhatā. Katamā tisso? Dukkha-dukkhatā, saṅkhāra-dukkhatā, vipariṇāma-dukkhatā – imā kho, bhikkhave, tisso dukkhatā."*

[12] *Visuddhi-Magga* (7. Cha-anussati-niddeso, Buddhânussati-Kathā:), 144. (PTS p. 212)

Similarly in the *Paṭisaṁbhidā-Magga*, II. Yuga-naddha-vagga (2. *Sacca-Kathā*), 8. (PTS II. 104):

Kathaṁ dukkhaṁ tath'aṭṭhena saccaṁ? Cattāro dukkhassa dukkh'aṭṭhā tathā avitathā anaññathā. Dukkhassa pīḷan'aṭṭho, saṅkhat'aṭṭho, santāp'aṭṭho, vipariṇām'aṭṭho – ime cattāro dukkhassa dukkh'aṭṭhā tathā avitathā anaññathā. Evaṁ dukkhaṁ tath'aṭṭhena saccaṁ.

[13] Two e.g. in the *Netti-Ppakkaraṇa*, (IV. Paṭiniddesa-vāra, 2. *Vicayahāra-Vibhaṅga* =) 11 (PTS 12): *Du-vidhaṁ dukkhaṁ – kāyikañ ca cetasikañ ca. Yaṁ kāyikaṁ idaṁ dukkhaṁ, yaṁ cetasikaṁ idaṁ domanassaṁ.* "Suffering is of two kinds: bodily and mental. Suffering is bodily, grief is mental."

Seven e.g. in the *Peṭakôpadesa*, 1. *Ariyasacca-Ppakāsana*-paṭhama-bhūmi, 12 (PTS 19–20). Here *appiya-saṁpayogo* and *piya-vippayogo* (contact with the unpleasant and separation from the pleasant) are added to the above two and the usual three. (However, these are presented rather as three possible different categorizations of suffering with 2, 2 and 3 categories respectively, not as one list of seven categories.)

substitution of *saṅkhata* for *saṅkhāra* is less ambiguous. The equivalent of Sanskrit *saṁskṛta*, it seems to refer not to mental impressions but rather to anything made up of parts, a compound. This accords very well with Buddhaghosa's interpretation of the triad.

In the *Sumaṅgala-Vilāsinī* (the Aṭṭha-kathā, i.e. commentary to our *locus classicus*), we read:

> 'The misery of suffering' – misery as actual suffering. This is the name of the feeling of suffering.
>
> 'The misery of compound (*saṅkhāra*)' – the misery arising from being a compound. This is the name of the feeling of neither suffering nor happiness. For this, being a compound, is tormented by arising, ageing and breaking up; therefore it is called 'the misery of compound' as it is essentially without another suffering.
>
> 'The misery of change' – misery in change. This is the name of the feeling of happiness. For when happiness changes, suffering arises; therefore happiness is called 'the misery of change'. Moreover, setting aside the feeling of suffering and happiness, all phenomena of the three levels of existence can be recognised as 'misery of compound', according to the saying [of the Buddha]: "All compounds are miserable" [*Dhamma-Pada* 278].[14]

Similar and even clearer is the analysis of the *Visuddhi-Magga*:

> A bodily or mentally painful feeling, because it is suffering according to both its essence and its name, is called the suffering of suffering.
>
> A pleasant feeling by changing causes the rise of suffering so it is the suffering of change.
>
> And even an indifferent feeling and all other *saṅkhāra*s in the three levels of existence, for they are tormented by rising and destruction: it is the suffering of *saṅkhāra*.[15][16]

5. Tri-lakṣaṇa

Now if we have pain, change, and compositeness in a triad, this seems to be very close to the series *dukkha, anicca, anattā*: painful, impermanent, insubstantial. This list[17] appears frequently in the Pali

---

[14] ***Dukkha-dukkhatā*** *ti dukkha-bhūtā dukkhatā. Dukkha-vedanāy' etaṁ nāmaṁ.* ***Saṅkhāra-dukkhatā*** *ti saṅkhāra-bhāvena dukkhatā. Adukkham-asukhâvedanāy' etaṁ nāmaṁ. Sā hi saṅkhatattā uppāda-jarā-bhaṅga-pīḷitā, tasmā añña-dukkha-sabhāva-virahato saṅkhāra-dukkhatā ti vuttā.* ***Vipariṇāma-dukkhatā*** *ti vipariṇāme dukkhatā. Sukha-vedanāy' etaṁ nāmaṁ. Sukhassa hi vipariṇāme dukkhaṁ uppajjati, tasmā sukhaṁ vipariṇāma-dukkhatā ti vuttaṁ. Api ca ṭhapetvā dukkha-vedanaṁ sukha-vedanañ ca sabbe pi tebhūmakā dhammā "sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā" ti vacanato saṅkhāra-dukkhatā ti veditabbā.* (PTS III. 992)

[15] *Visuddhi-Magga* (16. Indriya-sacca-niddeso, Dukkha-niddesa-kathā, Jāti-niddesa) 539 (PTS 499). Accidentally this list also continues and has seven items in it:

Kasmā pan' esā dukkhā? ti ce: Anekesaṁ dukkhānaṁ vatthu-bhāvato. Anekāni hi dukkhāni. Seyyathidaṁ – dukkha-dukkhaṁ, vipariṇāma-dukkhaṁ, saṅkhāra-dukkhaṁ, paṭicchanna-dukkhaṁ, appaṭicchanna-dukkhaṁ, pariyāya-dukkhaṁ, nippariyāya-dukkhan ti.

Tattha kāyika-cetasikā dukkhā vedanā sabhāvato ca nāmato ca dukkhattā ***dukkha-dukkhan*** *ti vuccati.*

Sukhā vedanā vipariṇāmena dukkh'uppatti-hetuto ***vipariṇāma-dukkhaṁ.***

Upekkhā vedanā ceva avasesā ca tebhūmakā saṅkhārā udaya-bbaya-ppaṭipīḷitattā ***saṅkhāra-dukkhaṁ.***

[16] The analysis of Vasubandhu in the *Abhidharma-Kośa-Bhāṣya* (II. 688–696, *ad* 6.3) is similar, starting *tisro hi duḥkhatāḥ – duḥkha-duḥkhatā, vipariṇāma-duḥkhatā, saṁskāra-duḥkhatā ca.*

Also closely parallel is Asaṅga's understanding in the *Viniścaya-Saṁgrahanī* on *Cintāmayī bhūmi*. See Wayman (1997: 244–246), where an interesting analysis of the relation *duḥkha-skandha-saṁskāra* can be found; he, however, insists on translating *saṁskāra*s with 'motivations' or 'constructions'.

[17] For a nice analysis of the interrelationships of the members of the *ti-lakkhaṇa* see "The Three Signata" in Wijesekera (1994: 71–83).

Canon,[18] characterising either the five *khandha*s (factors of a human) or the senses and their objects. Sometimes they are connected explicitly to our terms – to compositeness: "Here a certain person realises impermanence in all compounds ... painfulness in all compounds ... insubstantiality in all phenomena."[19] And to change: "Sight [etc.] is non-eternal, painful, insubstantial, necessarily changing."[20]

Why is a compound painful? I guess the most authentic interpretation comes from the last sentence of the Enlightened One: *vaya-dhammā saṅkhārā*, "compounds necessarily decay."[21] A compound can, and sooner or later will fall apart and will no longer exist. We cannot but lose everything. In the end even a Buddha dies.

Right now, we have accidentally connected one item, *saṁskāra-duḥkhatā* (the misery of compound) of our triad with another, *maraṇa* (death) of the longer list of the *Mahā-Vyutpatti*. There may be more interrelationships.

6. Less abstract formulas

The first four of the eight members in the longer list: birth, age, sickness and death are closely connected both logically and traditionally. However, *jāti,* birth seems a little misplaced; by most people, it is usually considered a reason for happiness.[22] Although there are some rather forced explanations in the tradition, stating that to be an embryo means unbearable suffering, still it seems more probable that birth is suffering only in a secondary sense. It starts that life which is full of suffering, so in a sense it is a *cause* of suffering only, not itself suffering.[23] This is exactly what we find in the *paticca-samuppāda*, the twelve links of dependent origination, where suffering (the last member in the chain) is the *result* of birth, the last but one.

The remaining three (old age, disease and death) are, of course, the famous three visions of the young Gotama: this is what sent him on the road leaving his home and family for ever. Although this

---

[18] And also in the *Yoga-Sūtra* II.5, just ten sūtras before our previous quotation: *anityâśuci-duḥkhânātmasu nitya-śuci-sukhâtma-khyātir avidyā.* "Ignorance is to take the impermanent, impure, painful and insubstantial for eternal, pure, agreeable and substantial."

[19] *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, VII. Sattaka-nipāta (2. Anusaya-vagga, 6–8. *Aniccânupassī-, Dukkhânupassī-, Anattânupassī-Sutta*), 16–18 (PTS IV. 13–14).

idh' ekacco puggalo sabba-saṅkhāresu aniccânupassī (/ dukkhânupassī / sabbesu dhammesu anattânupassī) viharati

[20] *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*, *Vibhaṅga* (2. Āyatana-vibhaṅga, 1. Suttanta-bhājanīya), 154 (PTS 70).

Cakkhuṁ aniccaṁ dukkhaṁ anattā vipariṇāma-dhammaṁ. [Similarly with the other eleven *āyatana*s, sensory factors: *rūpā, sotaṁ, saddā … mano, dhammā:* visible forms, hearing, sounds … mind, general features.]

[21] *Dīgha-Nikāya* (II. Mahā-vagga 3. =) 13. *Mahā-Parinibbāna-Sutta*, 218. (PTS II. 120)

[22] Of course giving birth is very painful, and it was also dangerous for the mother; according to legend, the Buddha's mother died a few days after Gautama's birth.

One might also wonder why old age, the period of being wise and respectable is considered so evidently painful. That in practice the obvious drawbacks of mental and bodily decline were not at all counterbalanced by rising in social status, not even in the case of monks, is plausibly suggested by Hinüber (1997).

[23] Although his conclusion is different, this has been recognised by Kalupahana (1994, p. 87).

On the other hand Pande (1995: 405–406) thinks that in the Nikāyas *dukkha* in general has the secondary meaning of "what may be proximately or remotely causal to such feeling." "This ambiguity of usage ... was noted in the Nikāyas themselves, and the theory of the threefold 'Dukkhatā' was possibly advanced to effect a reconciliation of the conflicting statements about dukkha."

is a nice and expressive myth, unfortunately we cannot prove its existence at a very early date. Rather it seems that in the Nikāyas we have typically only old age and death, often in the company of other forms of *dukkha*. That *jarā* and *maraṇa*, aging and death by themselves may equal suffering, is shown in this passage: “The noble disciple recognises age and death, recognises the origin of age and death, recognises the suppression of age and death and recognises the path leading to the suppression of age and death.”[24] Here ‘aging and death’ take the place of the standard ‘suffering’ of the Four Noble Truths.

Once we matched *saṁskāra-duḥkhatā* (the misery of compositeness) with death, it is easy to connect *jarā* (ageing) with *vipariṇāma* (change to the worse). What remains is to identify the parallel of *duḥkha-duḥkhatā*, suffering in the trivial sense with disease; for this, we have textual proof. Sometimes we find *dukkha* itself as the third after ageing and death; e.g. “Birth, age, death and suffering will rise no more.”[25] Frequently, as in the formula of dependent origination, we see the stereotyped grief-lamentation-suffering-dejectedness-trouble[26] line in this position. But of course, the usual *vyādhi*, sickness also fits best to ageing and death.

7. Conclusion

To sum up: we related the triple misery of *duḥkha-vipariṇāma-saṁskāra* (pain-change-compositeness) to the triple characterisation of the world as *duḥkha, anitya* and *anātman* (painful, impermanent and insubstantial). We also connected them to the three traumas of the Bodhisatta seeing a sick person, an aged man and a corpse.

I feel that it is just to say that there are essentially two sources of suffering only, pain and decay. Suffering in the immediate sense and suffering caused by the transience of all worldly phenomena. Both can be further analysed in a number of ways, but especially the latter lends itself easily to bifurcation into gradual corruption and final destruction, ageing and death. So the two lists of the *Mahā-Vyutpatti* are, after all, not so fundamentally different. We have found also that to see in the *saṁskāra-duḥkhatā* (misery of compositeness) pain related to the mental impressions (also called *saṁskāra*) is probably a late and not very plausible reinterpretation of the old concept.

---

[24] *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I. Mūla-paṇṇāsa (1. Mūlapariyāya-vagga, 9. *Sammā-Diṭṭhi-Sutta*), 92 (PTS I. 49).

…ariya-sāvako jarā-maraṇañ ca pajānāti, jarā-maraṇa-samudayañ ca pajānāti, jarā-maraṇa-nirodhañ ca pajānāti, jarā-maraṇa-nirodha-gāminiṁ paṭipadañ-ca pajānāti… Jāti-samudayā jarā-maraṇa-samudayo, jāti-nirodhā jarā-maraṇa-nirodho…

[25] *Majjhima-Nikāya*, III. Upari-paṇṇāsa (4. Vibhaṅga-vagga, 8. *Uddesa-Vibhaṅga-Sutta*), 313 (PTS III. 223).

…āyatiṁ jāti-jarā-maraṇa-dukkha-samudaya-sambhavo na hotī ti

[26] Several times in the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, e.g. I. Mūla-paṇṇāsa (4. Mahāyamaka-vagga, 8. *Mahā-Taṇhā-Saṅkhaya-Sutta*), 402.

…bhava-paccayā jāti, jāti-paccayā jarā-maraṇaṁ soka-parideva-dukkha-domanass'upāyāsā sambhavanti. Evam etassa kevalassa dukkha-kkhandhassa samudayo hoti.

VII. The vagueness of the philosophical Sūtras

No date, no author, no fixed text or meaning

The Sūtras are extremely important texts. In their respective fields, they are authoritative and normative, each one is the unique compendium of a school.

A philosophical Sūtra (or the functionally equivalent *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā*) is even more special. It is always the oldest surviving text of the school and most of the later texts are commentaries and subcommentaries on it. Its author is considered the founder of the school, a great *ṛṣi,* an omniscient being. Unfortunately, the Sūtras make very difficult reading.

No wonder we would like to know what their exact (original) texts were, what their meaning was; when they were composed, where and by whom.

In what follows, I will try to argue that we will never have the answers to these questions, not because we cannot find them, but because there are no such answers.

The philosophical Sūtras are texts of a very complex origin, developed in many different ways for a long time (say, about half of a millennium) by many different people. They always existed in several parallel versions and many parts of these texts had different meanings in different periods or in different recensions.

Now I will give some examples of the traces of this complex history in the surviving texts: rearrangements, reinterpretations and old variants, followed by a short remark on the authors.

1. *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* 6–11

The relatively late (5th century CE?) *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* (SK) seems to have all kinds of protective devices against corruption. It is written in verse, specifically in the not too easy *āryā* meter; and it clearly states that it consists of 70 verses. We also have seven different commentaries on it, although some of them depend on a common source.

In spite of all these facts, the text is far from unproblematic. Although it is frequently called *Sāṁkhya-Saptati*, i.e. "Seventy [Verses on] Sāṁkhya", altogether 73 verses are known to belong to it. The last one occurs in only one commentary, and the Chinese commentary remarks that the 72th is not original. Two commentaries end with verse 69, while verse 63 is missing in the Chinese version.

Already Keith (1949: 105) suggested that the verses 46–51 "are a later interpolation"; and there are others that may be suspect. In fact, I have earlier tried to reconstruct an "original" SK of only fifty verses (Ruzsa 1997). In the following, I present only one particularly clear and important case that illustrates a number of points, notably the change of order and that such modifications did not happen in a single step.

The current text of SK 6–11:

6 We understand things beyond the senses through inference by analogy.
An imperceptible thing not proven even this way is proven by the proper traditional text.

7 Because – too far, nearness, injury of a sense, inattention,
subtlety, interposition, suppression, mingling with similar.

8 It is unobserved because of subtlety, not nonexistence; it is observed from its effect.
And that effect is the Great [= intellect] etc., different from *Prakṛti* and also similar.

9 The nonexistent does not act; we use [appropriate] matter; not everything comes into existence;
the able makes what it is able to make; and its essence is its cause: therefore it is an effect of a real.

10 The Manifest is caused, impermanent, limited, active, many, has a substrate, observable,
has parts, dependent. The Unmanifest is the opposite.

11 The Manifest has the three qualities; it is unseparated, object, common, non-conscious, productive.
Similarly the Principal [= the Unmanifest]. The *Puruṣa* is the opposite, and also similar.[1]

Verse 7 is problematic. It has no subject or predicate (probably 'An existent may be unobserved', *satām anupalabdhiḥ* has to be supplied), and the caesura is also missing. The somewhat concise but nicely and fairly clearly written SK always uses complete sentences (unlike the Sūtras), and most of the time observes the caesura carefully. By content the verse seems to be a pedantic explanatory remark added before verse 8. The latter states that the *Prakṛti* is imperceptible on account of its subtlety and not because it does not exist; verse 7 adds redundantly[2] a list of eight possible causes for not observing something in spite of its being real.[3]

---

[1] 6 *Sāmānyatas tu dṛṣṭād atîndriyāṇām pratītir anumānāt.*
Tasmād api câsiddham parokṣam āptâgamāt siddham.

7 *Ati-dūrāt, sāmīpyād, indriya-ghātān, mano-'navasthānāt,*
saukṣmyād, vyavadhānād, abhibhavāt, samānâbhihārāc ca.

8 *Saukṣmyāt tad-anupalabdhir, nâbhāvāt: kāryatas tad-upalabdhiḥ.*
Mahad-ādi tac ca kāryam; Prakṛti-virūpaṁ, sarūpaṁ ca.

9 *Asad-akaraṇād, upādāna-grahaṇāt, sarva-sambhavâbhāvāt,*
śaktasya śakya-karaṇāt, kāraṇa-bhāvāc ca sat-kāryam.

10 *Hetumad, anityam, avyāpi, sakriyam, anekam, āśritaṁ, liṅgam,*
sâvayavaṁ, para-tantraṁ Vyaktaṁ. Viparītam Avyaktam.

11 *Tri-guṇam, aviveki, viṣayaḥ, sāmānyam, a-cetanaṁ, prasava-dharmi*
Vyaktaṁ; tathā Pradhānaṁ. Tad-viparītas, tathā ca Pumān.

[2] The SK definitely did not want to go into details about cognition and did absolutely refrain from giving irrelevant complete lists here. It but cursorily states the school-specific positions. For example, about **the three kinds of inference** we learn only that "it has been explained" (***tri-vidham anumānam*** *ākhyātam*, verse 5), clearly in the *Nyāya-Sūtra* 1.1.5 (*Atha tat-pūrvakaṁ* ***tri-vidham anumānaṁ:*** *pūrvavac, cheṣavat, sāmānyato dṛṣṭaṁ.* "Then inference is based on that [i.e. perception]; it has three kinds: like before; like the rest; and seen by similarity"). Only the third kind, *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* is actually named in the SK (verse 6), as only this plays a role in the exposition of Sāṁkhya.

[3] The list is a little expanded version of one found in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* ad Pāṇini 4.1.3 (p. 20): *Ṣaḍbhiḥ prakāraiḥ satāṁ bhāvānām anupalabdhir bhavati: ati-saṁnikarṣāt, ati-viprakarṣāt, mūrty-antara-vyavadhānāt, tamasâvṛtatvād,*

Furthermore, verse 8 begins with an ‘it’ (“it is not observed on account of its subtlety”, *saukṣmyāt **tad**-an-upalabdhir*) that should refer to the unmanifest *Prakṛti* (*Avyakta* or *Pradhāna*), but we do not find it either in verse 7 or, after dropping that, in verse 6. Actually the only possible location for verse 8 is after verse 10 that ends on the very word *Avyakta,* Unmanifest.

So we get the following, probably more original sequence:

6 We understand things beyond the senses through inference by analogy.
An imperceptible thing not proven even this way is proven by the proper traditional text.

9 The nonexistent does not act; we use [appropriate] matter; not everything comes into existence;
the able makes what it is able to make; and its essence is its cause: therefore it is an effect of a real.

10 The Manifest is caused, impermanent, limited, active, many, has a substrate, observable,
has parts, dependent. The Unmanifest is the opposite.

8 It is unobserved because of subtlety, not nonexistence; it is observed from its effect.
And that effect is the Great [= intellect] etc., different from *Prakṛti* and also similar.

11 The Manifest has the three qualities; it is unseparated, object, common, non-conscious, productive.
Similarly the Principal [= the Unmanifest]. The *Puruṣa* is the opposite, and also similar.

If we compare this with the current text, it is easy to see that it is far superior in all respects – it is a nice, logical exposition with a continuous flow of argument:

— Imperceptibles are known by inference.
— Causes can be inferred from their effects.
— The essential attributes of Manifest *Prakṛti.* The Unmanifest has contrary attributes.
— It is unperceived, but we know it from its effects, the forms of the Manifest.
— The common attributes of the Unmanifest and the Manifest *Prakṛti.* The *Puruṣa* has contrary attributes.

So before giving the fundamental ontology of the system (the empirically observable Manifest; its Unmanifest ground, material Nature, *Prakṛti*; and Consciousness, *Puruṣa*) the epistemological framework is given: how and why can unobservable entities like the Unmanifest be known.

Perhaps something like this happened. Somebody added as a comment verse 7; its natural position was before verse 8. But this way the linguistic and logical continuity of the text was broken, so an editor later relocated verses 7–8 to the only possible place. Verse 7 is about perception, so it belongs to the block vv. 4–6 dealing with cognition; verse 8 belongs to the block vv. 10–21, the fundamental components of the world and their relation. So we get the order 4–6; 7–8; 10–21. And verse 9 could be understood as an inserted comment on causality mentioned in verse 8.

This sequence of events is possible only if we have here a minimum of three important actors: the author; someone making the addition; and the editor or rearranger.

Another example from the SK will be examined in Chapter IX, on the changing interpretation of *kārikā* 1. Also some problems of the *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra* will be discussed there in section 4, and in section 5, footnote 46 the late addition of a sūtra will be noticed.

---

indriya-daurbalyāt, ati-pramādād iti. (“There are six ways in which real existents are unperceived: great proximity, great distance, the interposition of another body, being covered by darkness, the weakness of a sense, great carelessness.”) This seems to be almost identical to the SK list where two more items are added (*saukṣmya* and *samānâbhihāra,* subtlety and mingling with similar).

2. *Nyāya-Sūtra* 1.1.2 & 1.1.9

It seems that among the *darśana*s Nyāya was studied most from the earliest times, perhaps not as a philosophy but rather as a generally accepted tool of learned discussion in many fields of learning, notably in law. There are many texts and commentaries, some of them extant in numerous or rather innumerable copies.

In spite of this the fundamental text of the school, the *Nyāya-Sūtra* presents very serious textual difficulties, as Daya Krishna (2004, see esp. pp. 241–280) has forcefully argued; but from his presentation it appears that *adhyāya* 1 (= 1.1–1.2) is essentially free of variants. Also, this first chapter is a clearly structured text, perhaps the best organized text among all the traditional Sūtras. It starts with a table of contents listing the 16 categories of the system:

> Cognition, objects of cognition, doubt, purpose, example, accepted tenet, members [of inference], indirect reasoning, decision, discussion, debate, objection, false reason, misinterpretation, overgeneralization and losing move – true knowledge of them leads to the highest good. (1.1.1)[4]

These categories are defined and expounded in the rest of the chapter. The list is rigidly adhered to up until the last sūtra (1.2.20) and not a single item is left out; also the order is followed precisely.

But even in this part we encounter several difficulties. First, it is rather surprising that knowledge of eristic leads to the highest good, i.e. liberation; and also that the typical Vaiśeṣika term, *niḥśreyasa* is used instead of the Naiyāyika *apavarga* (‘ending’). Both problems are remedied in the next sūtra, but this presents a new difficulty: what is the relation of the two sūtras?

> Suffering, birth, activity, error and false knowledge – when they disappear one after the other, the next will also disappear; and this leads to ending (i.e., liberation) (1.1.2)[5]

Actually this sūtra is known to have some variant readings,[6] but they will not be considered here, as they are not essential to our argument.

The commentaries see no difficulty here: *apavarga* is but a synonym of *niḥśreyasa,* and this sūtra merely states that final release does not follow immediately upon correct knowledge but through the following series: no error – no activity – no rebirth.

But in fact this sūtra is clearly just a shortened version of the Buddhist *pratītya-samutpāda* (‘dependent origination’, the twelve-membered causal chain leading from ignorance to suffering), since both its idea and its wording is uncomfortably close.[7] And of course “the disappearance of false knowledge” mentioned here is completely different from the true knowledge of the elements of eristic mentioned in the previous sūtra.

---

4 *Pramāṇa-prameya-saṁśaya-prayojana-dṛṣṭānta-siddhântâvayava-tarka-nirṇaya-vāda-jalpa-vitaṇḍā-hetvābhāsa-cchala-jāti-nigrahasthānānāṁ tattva-jñānān niḥśreyasâdhigamaḥ.*

5 *Duḥkha-janma-pravṛtti-doṣa-mithyājñānānām uttarôttarâpāye tad-anantarâpāyād apavargaḥ.*

6 For *'pāyād* we have *'bhāvād* in
– the *Nyāya-Sūcī-Nibandha* as printed in Nagasampige (1992: I. 35), but not as it appears in Daya Krishna (2004: 289).
– Gangadhar Sastri’s Benares edition of Vātsyāyana’s *Nyāya-Bhāṣya*, according to Nyaya-Tarkatirtha–Tarkatirtha (1936–44: 69, fn. 1)
– Rādhāmohana Vidyāvācaspati Gosvāmin’s *Nyāya-Sūtra* edition and commentary, according to Nagasampige (1992: 8, fn. 1)
– the *Nyāya-Sūtra-Vivaraṇa;* it further omits *apavargaḥ* (Nagasampige 1992: 8).

7 In the Buddhist chain, members 1–2 and 10–12 are ignorance, mental dispositions… becoming, birth and suffering. Elements 1, 11 and 12 are identical to those in the Nyāya list. The mental dispositions (*saṁskāra*s) are not the same, but closely related to errors; while *bhava,* ‘becoming’ or worldly existence is practically identical with activity.

To increase the confusion, a little later we find a similar but not identical list:

> The objects of cognition are: a) soul, body, the senses and their objects, the intellect and the mind; b) activity, error, existence after death, karmic fruit, suffering and its ending. (1.1.9).[8]

The first six items give an anthropology in terms of substances;[9] the last six in terms of function. And this latter comes very close to the list in sūtra 2: activity, error, suffering and its ending (*pravṛtti, doṣa, duḥkha* and *apavarga*) are common to both; existence after death (*pretya-bhāva*) is explained as rebirth in 1.1.19,[10] so it is practically identical with the earlier 'birth' (*janman*). So only *phala,* karmic fruit does not match *mithyā-jñāna*, false knowledge.

The ordering of the two lists is also somewhat different:

1.1.9		activity	error	rebirth	karmic fruit	suffering
1.1.2	false knowledge	error	activity	birth		suffering

This change of order seems to depend on the presence or absence of the cognitive starting-point. When false knowledge is explicitly mentioned, it clearly leads to error; when it is omitted, error is just the unavoidable consequence of the imperfection of our actions. The absence of karmic fruit before *duḥkha* in the more Buddhistic version is understandable: for a Buddhist, life is suffering by definition (for it is impermanent), whereas for others bad karma (as a result of our errors in past lives) is needed to explain suffering.

The two lists are clearly variants, but markedly different variants of the same idea. The presence of both, and especially so close to each other, seems to be incompatible with the hypothesis of a single author: one of them may be a later addition. As 1.1.9 is in its proper place according to the table of contents (given in 1.1.1) and 1.1.10–1.1.22 explain in order all the 12 categories listed here, its authenticity seems undoubtable. So most probably sūtra 2 is a later interpolation.

Something like the following might have happened: As a formal gesture to the growing importance of the concept of salvation in orthodox circles, the table of contents was (re-?) formulated to say that Nyāya leads to the highest good. Noticing the absurdity of this claim, an editor added sūtra 2. He added it, but did not invent it; for he could have written something fully in accord with sūtra 9. So it appears that he took an existing sūtra that honestly expressed the idea that knowledge leads to liberation. This sūtra, or rather a somewhat different version of it may have also been the source of (the second half of) our sūtra 9, formulated in a tradition that did not emphasize the role of ignorance in suffering. (A similar difference of approach is found in early Buddhism: some texts give ignorance, others craving as the root cause of suffering.)

So this example testifies not only to an interpolation into a very well structured and relatively fixed text. The more important point is that it indirectly shows that there were significantly different parallel versions of a thought in sūtra form and that people did not consider them as separate texts but rather as parts of the given tradition. When editing (or writing down) the full text, any sūtra from any branch of the tradition could be inserted at any point.

---

8 *Ātma-śarīrêndriyârtha-buddhi-manaḥ–pravṛtti-doṣa-pretyabhāva-phala-duḥkhâpavargās tu prameyam.*

9 Although the terminology is unrelated, the structure of this list resembles closely the five *skandha*s of the Buddhists. The sharpest contrast is, of course, between the soul (*ātman*) of Nyāya and the consciousness (*saṁjñā*) of Buddhism.

10 *Punar-utpattiḥ pretya-bhāvaḥ.* (Existence after death is rebirth.)

3. *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* 1.1.1–1.1.4U

In the case of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* textual problems are more apparent than in other cases, for here the vulgate has changed relatively recently. Earlier the accepted text was that of Śaṅkara Miśra's *(Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra-) Upaskāra*,[11] while since the discovery of several older commentaries the nicely edited *sūtra-pāṭha* of Candrānanda's *Vṛtti* has been generally followed.

The beginning of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*, following the earlier vulgate:

1.1.1 From now we shall explain dharma.

1.1.2 Dharma is that which guarantees rising (to heaven) and the highest good.

1.1.3 The sacred tradition is valid, for it declares that (i.e., dharma).

1.1.4U The categories are substance, quality, movement, generality, difference and inherence. Produced by a specific dharma, true knowledge of these categories through their similarities and dissimilarities leads to the highest good.[12]

This whole block is even more out of place than the beginning of the *Nyāya-Sūtra* analyzed above. The categories of the phenomenal world have nothing to do with heaven and even less with liberation; and of course the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* is not an investigation of dharma. Dharma, religious duty, is the proper subject of the ritualistic Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā school – and *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* 1.1.1 seems to be a near-borrowing of their first sūtra: "From now the investigation of dharma."[13]

The third sūtra is identical with the very last sūtra (10.21 = 10.2.9U) and seems to be without any function here. And, together with the second, it is missing in one of the old commentaries, Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra's *Vṛtti* (Ṭhakkura 1985: 58–59).

The fourth sūtra is somewhat in conflict with the second: there dharma leads to liberation, here knowledge of the categories does the same. Also its wording ("…true knowledge of them [leads to] the highest good", *tattva-jñānān niḥśreyasam*) is curiously similar to *Nyāya-Sūtra* 1.1.1 ("…true knowledge of them leads to the highest good", *tattva-jñānān niḥśreyasâdhigamaḥ*).[14] Further it is almost verbatim identical with the beginning of Praśastapāda's *Padārtha-Dharma-Saṁgraha*, the definitive exposition of Vaiśeṣika. Identical parts are shown in bold:

> [2] **The** (six) **categories are substance, quality, movement, generality, difference and inherence. True knowledge of them through their similarities and dissimilarities** causes **the highest good.** And only the **dharma** manifest in the commands of the Lord leads to it.[15]

---

[11] Sūtras of this text are marked with a U added to the number.

[12] 1.1.1 *Athâto dharmaṁ vyākhyāsyāmaḥ.*
1.1.2 *Yato 'bhyudaya-niḥśreyasa-siddhiḥ, sa dharmaḥ.*
1.1.3 *Tad-vacanād āmnāyasya prāmāṇyam.*
1.1.4U *Dharma-viśeṣa-prasūtād dravya-guṇa-karma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyānāṁ padārthānāṁ sādharmya-vaidharmyābhyāṁ tattva-jñānān niḥśreyasam.*

[13] *Athâto dharma-jijñāsā.* (*Mīmāṁsā-Sūtra* 1.1.1)

[14] Actually we have a quotation of the forerunner of this sūtra exactly in the form of the *Nyāya-Sūtra*, i.e. adding *adhigama* and leaving out all the new elements (probably taken from Praśastapāda's work) of 1.1.4U: *…āha: dravya-guṇa-karma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyānāṁ tattva-jñānān niḥśreyasâdhigamaḥ.* This is from the Jaina *Sarva-Siddhānta-Praveśaka.* Of its two manuscripts the seemingly later one is dated 1201 Vikrama, i.e. 1144 CE. Jambuvijayaji (1961: 141).

[15] ***dravya-guṇa-karma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyānām*** *(ṣaṇṇām)* ***padārthānām sādharmya-vaidharmyābhyāṁ tattva-jñān****am* ***nihśreyasa****-hetuḥ. tac c' eśvara-codanā'bhivyaktād* ***dharmā****d eva.*

If we add that sūtra 4 is missing in the old commentaries, it would seem safe to delete it. However, this is the only one of the four that has some fitting, or even expected content, namely the list of the fundamental categories of the system.

Investigating this problem, Frauwallner (1984) found several quotations in fairly old texts that would suggest that instead of the four sūtras quoted above, *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* once began with the following ones:

> *1 We shall set forth all that is (here) real (or, a form of being).
>
> *2 The six categories are substance, quality, movement, generality, difference and inherence.[16]

Unfortunately Frauwallner's three sources for the first *sūtra are not independent at all. All versions come from commentaries on the *Padārtha-Dharma-Saṁgraha.* Two of them occur in the *Vyomavatī* commenting on the only two occurrences of the word *anabhidhānāt,* 'because it is not mentioned' [in the *Sūtra*]. The third source is Udayana's *Kiraṇāvalī* commenting on the second *anabhidhānāt*; his wording is so close to Vyomaśiva's that it seems clear that he is but repeating the older commentary.[17]

So we are left with Vyomaśiva referring twice to *sūtra 1, but in so widely different forms that we can hardly call them quotations.[18] Is it really conceivable that somebody writing a 500 pages long book on Vaiśeṣika would quote the very first sūtra of the system in two versions? It seems impossible, especially since Vyomaśiva does know 1.1.1–2, quotes them exactly (I.12) and his analysis shows unmistakably that he considers these the first two sūtras.

Still, Vyomaśiva's calling *sūtra 1 "the promise" of Kaṇāda is suggestive; Candrānanda in his commentary to the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* describes 1.1.1 as the *pratijñā,* promise. So this might have been an alternative beginning of the *Sūtra*, but clearly not the "original" beginning as Frauwallner thought. For the expression *bhāva-rūpa* ('form of existence'?) is hardly possible in the language of the *Sūtra*, where *rūpa* always means colour (visible quality).

Frauwallner's only source for *2 is Haribhadra's *Nyāya-Praveśaka-Vr̥tti*, where it does not appear as a direct quotation. In the *Sarva-Darśana-Saṁgraha* of Mādhava, however, we have a verbatim reference:

> It is an enunciation of the topic: "Those categories are exactly six – the existents (are) substance, quality, movement, generality, difference and inherence."[19]

From this text, we would reconstruct a variant of Frauwallner's second *sūtra:

> *2a The existents are substance, quality, movement, generality, difference and inherence.[20]

---

[16] *1 *Yad (iha) bhāva-rūpaṁ tat sarvam abhidhāsyāmaḥ*.
*2 *Dravya-guṇa-karma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyāḥ ṣaṭ padārthāḥ.*

[17] I give the text first of the *Vyomavatī* (II.73), then of the *Kiraṇāvalī* (148); bold shows identical wording:
Pratijñātaṁ *ca* ***maha-rṣiṇā****:* ***"Yad bhāva-rūpaṁ, tat sarvam abhidhāsyām****î* ***"ti.***
Sarvârthôpadeśa-pravr̥ttena ***maha-rṣiṇā pratijñātaṁ*** *hi tena:* ***"Yad bhāva-rūpaṁ, tat sarvam abhidhāsyām****a"* ***iti****.*

And **the great seer promised**: "I **shall set forth all that is real**."
For he, **the great seer** starting to teach all things **promised**: "We **shall set forth all that is real**."

[18] *"Y ad iha bhāva-rūpaṁ, tat sarvaṁ mayôpasaṁkhyātavyam" iti ~~hi~~ pratijñā muneḥ.* (I.21; the *hi* is not found in the MS.)
Pratijñātaṁ ca maha-rṣiṇā: "Yad bhāva-rūpaṁ, tat sarvam abhidhāsyāmî"ti. (II.73)

"All that is real here has to be enumerated by me" – this is the promise of the sage.
And the great seer promised: "I shall set forth all that is real."

[19] *Tatra "Dravya-guṇa-karmma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyā bhāvā iti ṣaḍ eva te padārthā" ity uddeśaḥ.* – This is the text of Vidyāsāgara (1853–58: 105, lines 2–3); in Cowell and Gough (1986: 206, lines 13–14) *bhāvāḥ* is missing. Considering the presence of *bhāva-rūpaṁ* in *1 and the improbability of someone adding *bhāvāḥ* here, Vidyāsāgara's version is clearly superior.

The remaining part ("those categories are exactly six") may come from an early gloss (for the word *padārtha*, 'category' does not appear in the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*) that could have influenced both 1.1.4U and Praśastapāda.

Notice that if we drop the seemingly redundant "exactly six", the Sanskrit text will be at least ambiguous: *samavāyābhāvā iti* would rather suggest "inherence and nonexistence", and then this sūtra would belong to that branch of the school that accepted *abhāva* as a separate seventh category. And we do find this version, although not as a sūtra, in the *Nibandha-Sāra* or "anonymous commentary on the Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra edited by A. Thakkura". "Here the objects of knowledge should be taught: substance, quality, movement, generality, difference, inherence and nonexistence."[21] So we may suggest another reconstruction:

*2b The categories are substance, quality, movement, generality, difference, inherence and nonexistence.

All these mentioned could be early sūtras in one tradition or another, although neither could be really old. For not only the word 'category' is absent in the body of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*, but even the concept of those six (or seven) constituting a unity. Only the first three (substance, quality, movement) seem to constitute an old group.

The general picture emerging is that we know of no "original" beginning of the *Sūtra.* The different editors or schools, at a fairly late period, added different introductory sūtras to the text. The religious type (1.1.1–3) and the category-list type (*1–2) lived side by side for a long time, perhaps with the former being more widespread. The version found in the *Upaskāra* joined the two approaches, utilizing *Praśastapāda*'s text in transforming *2 into 1.1.4U.

4. *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* 3.1.1–3.2.5

Bronkhorst (1994) has convincingly shown that the current order of the sūtras in this chapter of the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* is very far from the original. In the present form and following the standard interpretation, many sūtras are construed implausibly, and the order of exposition is broken.

From the list of the nine substances given in 1.1.4, the first seven were discussed in *adhyāya* 2. Therefore here, at the beginning of *adhyāya* 3 we would expect a description of the last two substances: (1) the soul and (2) the mind. What we find instead is (1) a proof of the soul, (2) a description of the mind and (3) a description of the soul. It is not possible to repeat Bronkhorst's complex and involved argument here; instead, starting from his results, I will try to show a probable scenario for the changes.

First, let us see the text as it stands today. To translate the sūtras is an impossibility, since often they are not complete sentences and there is no reliable method to decide how they should be completed. Part of the following analysis rests on the fact that they were historically understood in widely different ways. The following attempt at a translation is meant only to give an idea to those not reading Sanskrit or not familiar with the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra.* For blocks of sūtras, numbered English titles are given; these will be used later in the reconstruction of the development of the text. These titles do not necessarily summarize all the sūtras below them; they only highlight that aspect of their content that is most relevant here.

---

[20] *Dravya-guṇa-karma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyā bhāvāḥ.*

[21] *Iha dravya-guṇa-karma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyâbhāvâkhyaṁ prameyaṁ pratipādanīyam.* (Ṭhakkura 1985: 255). This occurs in the introduction to the interpretation of 1.1.4 giving a list of the nine substances.

(1) The senses and their objects are well known; therefore, it [soul] must be something else

3.1.1 The senses and their objects are well known.

3.1.2 The fact that the senses and their objects are well known is the ground to state that it is an object other than the senses and their objects.[22]

(2) That is not a correct reason

3.1.3 That is not a correct reason.[23]

(3) Inference: correct and incorrect reason

3.1.4 When the cause is not known,
3.1.5 when the effect is not known,
3.1.6 and when it is not known,
3.1.7 "there is another ground[24] for it" is not a correct reason.
3.1.7a For one object is not a correct reason for another object.[25]
3.1.8 In contact, inherent, co-inherent, and contrary. Effect of another effect, cause of another cause. An absent contrary of present, present of absent. Absent of absent, present of present. [26]
3.1.9 It must be well known if it is a basis of a correct reason, therefore
3.1.10 what is not known well is not a correct reason.
3.1.11 What is absent and what is doubtful is not a correct reason:
3.1.12 "It is a horse, for it has horns", and "It is a cow, for it has horns." [27]

(4) From the proximity of soul, mind, sense and object arises [knowledge,] another [proof for the existence of soul]

3.1.13 What arises from the proximity of soul, sense, mind and object is another.[28]

(5) From the activity and inactivity observed in our souls, other souls can be inferred

3.1.14 And the activity and inactivity seen in our souls is a sign in others.[29]

---

[22] 3.1.1 *Prasiddhā indriyârthāḥ.*
3.1.2 *Indriyârtha-prasiddhir indriyârthebhyo 'rthântaratve hetuḥ.*

[23] 3.1.3 *So 'napadeśaḥ.*

[24] The terms here translated as reason, cause and ground are said to be synonyms in sūtra 9.20:
Ground, reason, sign, omen, proof, cause: they are the same thing.
Hetur, apadeśo, liṅgaṁ, nimittaṁ, pramāṇaṁ, kāraṇam ity anarthā'ntaram.

[25] This sūtra is missing in Candrānanda's commentary.

[26] This sūtra, giving the possible relations establishing a correct reason is clearly an expanded variant of 9.18:
"This is its effect, cause, relatum, co-inherent and contrary" – this is [knowledge] from a sign.
"Asyêdaṁ – kāryaṁ, kāraṇam, sambandhy, ekârtha-samavāyi, virodhi cê"ti laiṅgikam.

[27] 3.1.4 *Kāraṇâjñānāt,*
3.1.5 *kāryâjñānāt,*
3.1.6 *ajñānāc ca.*
3.1.7 *Anya eva hetur ity anapadeśaḥ.*
3.1.7a *Arthântaraṁ hy arthântarasyânapadeśaḥ.*
3.1.8 *Saṁyogi, samavāyy, ekârtha-samavāyi, virodhi ca. Kāryaṁ kāryântarasya, kāraṇaṁ kāraṇântarasya. Virodhy abhūtaṁ bhūtasya, bhūtam abhūtasyâbhūtam abhūtasya, bhūtaṁ bhūtasya.*
3.1.9 *Prasiddha-pūrvakatvād apadeśasya,*
3.1.10 *aprasiddho 'napadeśaḥ.*
3.1.11 *Asan sandigdhaś cânapadeśaḥ.*
3.1.12 *"Viṣāṇī, tasmād aśvo"; "viṣāṇī, tasmād gaur" iti ca.*

[28] 3.1.13 *Ātmêndriya-mano'rtha-sannikarṣād yan niṣpadyate, tad anyat.*

[29] 3.1.14 *Pravṛtti-nivṛttī ca pratyag-ātmani dṛṣṭe paratra liṅgam iti.*

(6) Mind is inferred from the absence or presence of cognition, even when soul, sense and object are in proximity

3.2.1 The absence and presence of cognition when soul, sense and object are in proximity is a sign of the mind.
3.2.2 It is an eternal substance, as explained by [the explanation given for] air.
3.2.3 There is one mind, for cognitions and efforts are not simultaneous.[30]

(7) Soul is inferred from its control of the mind

3.2.4 Breathing in and out, closing and opening the eyes, life, the movement of mind, change in another sense; pleasure and pain; desire and aversion; and effort are signs of the soul.
3.2.5 It is an eternal substance, as explained by [the explanation given for] air.[31]

Now we will start from where Bronkhorst finished; a step-by step reconstruction shows how we arrive from a presumable "original" at what we have now. Underlining shows that part of the text that triggered the next change.

1. Initially, we had only two short blocks about the last two substances, in the order declared in 1.1.4, i.e. first soul (*ātman*), then mind (*manas*):

(7) Soul is inferred from its control of the mind
(6) Mind is inferred from the absence of cognition, even when soul, sense and object are in proximity.

2. As the control of mind is an important function of the soul, it was felt that the definition of *manas* should come first: the order was reversed.
3. As the proof of mind presupposes a given analysis of perception, a definition of perception (4) is quoted before it. This sūtra probably came from a block analyzing cognition where it followed a description of inference.[32]

(4) From the proximity of soul, mind, sense and object arises another [cognition, i.e. perception]
(6) Mind is inferred from the absence of cognition, even when soul, sense and object are in proximity
(7) Soul is inferred from its control of the mind

4. As now it seemed that the starting point is the definition of perception, a trivial comment (1a) was added explaining why there is no sūtra on the other two factors in it, i.e. on the senses and their objects, only on mind and soul.
5. As the definition of perception that is used (accidentally, but unmistakably) referred back to the immediately preceding discussion of inference, this block on inference (3) was copied here:

(3) Inference: correct and incorrect reason
(4) From the proximity of soul, mind, sense and object arises another [cognition, i.e. perception]
(1a) The senses and the objects are well known
(6) Mind is inferred from the absence of cognition, even when soul, sense and object are in proximity
(7) Soul is inferred from its control of the mind

---

[30] 3.2.1 *Ātmêndriyârtha-sannikarṣe jñānasyâbhāvo bhāvaś ca manaso liṅgam.*
3.2.2 *Dravyatva-nityatve vāyunā vyākhyāte.*
3.2.3 *Prayatnâyaugapadyāj, jñānâyaugapadyāc câikaṁ manaḥ.*

[31] 3.2.4 *Prāṇâpāna-nimeṣônmeṣa-jīvana-mano-gatîndriyântara-vikārāḥ, sukha-duḥkhe, icchā-dveṣau, prayatnaś cêty ātma-liṅgāni.*
3.2.5 *Dravyatva-nityatve vāyunā vyākhyāte.*

[32] In the current *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*, in the group of sūtras expounding the kinds of cognition in the ninth chapter, their order is the more standard one (perception, inference, testimony) and therefore the text is somewhat different: *9.13&15 ...pratyakṣam ... dravyā'ntareṣu ātm'endriya-mano'rtha-sannikarṣāc ca.*

6. A comment on (1a), the trivial addition in step 4, reinterprets its function:

(3) Inference: correct and incorrect reason
(4) From the proximity of soul, mind, sense and object arises another [cognition, i.e. perception]
(1)The senses and the objects are well known; <u>therefore it</u> [mind] <u>must be something else</u>
(6) Mind is inferred from the absence of cognition, even when soul, sense and object are in proximity
(7) Soul is inferred from its control of the mind

7. The comment of step 6, taken to be a sūtra (1), is understood to refer to the soul.
8. Then the whole text is carefully rearranged, adding the connecting sūtra that it is not a correct reason (2). The definition of perception (4) is reinterpreted as a proof for the existence of the soul. (In both cases, the expression „it is something else" becomes misunderstood as proving the soul.)
9. Last a proof of other souls (5) is inserted.

(1) The senses and the objects are well known; therefore, it [soul] must be something else
(2) That is not a correct reason
(3) Inference: correct and incorrect reason
(4) From the proximity of soul, mind, sense and object arises [knowledge,] another [proof for the existence of soul]
(5) From the activity and inactivity observed in our souls, other souls can be inferred
(6) Mind is inferred from the absence of cognition, even when soul, sense and object are in proximity
(7) Soul is inferred from its control of the mind

I have tried hard to group together those steps that could possibly have been made by the same person; but even so, instead of nine we have at least five different actors. Of course, I am not suggesting that this is exactly how it happened. Nevertheless, provided Bronkhorst's original results are sound – and he convinced me – I do not think a much simpler story could credibly connect the "original" to the current version. For in the process we have several cases of misunderstanding sūtras, mistaking comments for sūtras and intentional editorial activity rearranging the material.

There are many similar complexities everywhere in the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra.* Preisendanz (1994) discussed in detail the many textual variants and the significantly different interpretations of sūtras 4.1.6 and 9 in a wider context. Probably it was this unusual fluidity of the text that motivated Praśastapāda when writing his *Padārtha-Dharma-Saṁgraha* not to make a commentary on the *Sūtra*; consequently, he could arrange his otherwise quite commentarial material in an autonomous order on logical principles.

5. *Brahma-Sūtra* and *Yoga-Sūtra*

The notoriously obscure *Brahma-Sūtra* seems to be fairly resistant to philological analysis, but some remarks are still possible.

Although the text seems relatively fixed, there are some differences among the versions commented upon by the oldest three commentators (Śaṅkara, Bhāskara and Rāmānuja). Nakamura (1950–56: 451–465) investigated this; his findings may be summarized as follows. Of the 555 sūtras there are eight that do not occur in all three texts (five in one of them only), and 22 sūtras are split in two by one at least of the commentators. There are differences in the wording of about 70 sūtras. In 27 cases, there is no agreement on what text a given sūtra refers to, and in another 209 cases, the supposed meaning differs. To this we may add that not infrequently Śaṅkara himself proposes more than one interpretation to a sūtra.

Summarizing the results of his analysis of the history of the *Sūtra*, Nakamura (1950–56: 433) says that three main periods have to be distinguished. First in a school of the *Sāma-Veda,* a synopsis of some Upaniṣads was composed focusing on the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*.[33] Then the Upaniṣads of the other Vedas were included. Lastly, the refutations of other schools were added and the whole work was edited and unified.

Of the *Yoga-Sūtra,* little needs to be said as most scholars agree that it is a compilation of separate texts. Dasgupta (1930: 53) suggested that the entire fourth chapter might be a subsequent addition, while Maas (2006: xvi–xvii) thinks that Vyāsa, the commentator (whom he identifies with Patañjali) created the text from older fragments.[34] Even Larson (2008: 101) who tries really hard to see the text as a continuous composition has to admit that "some *sūtras* have been interpolated here and there throughout the Y[oga-]S[ūtra] and … some of the *sūtras* may be considerably older than the final redaction of the text that we now have".

6. The authors

The authors of the Sūtras are generally held to be the founder *ṛṣi*s of the respective schools.

This is clearly fictitious in case of the very late *Sāṁkhya-Sūtra,* as the much earlier SK mentions after the founder (Kapila) Āsuri and then Pañcaśikha (expanding the doctrine), both of them ancient sages in the eyes of the author. The SK mentions Īśvarakṛṣṇa who summarised the teaching in *āryā* verse, and therefore he is usually taken to be the author of the SK. But even this is far from clear, as an early authority, Paramārtha (translator of the SK into Chinese in the middle of the 6th century) says in his *Life of Vasubandhu* that the SK is the work of Vindhyavāsa who modified the text (?) of the Nāga king Vṛṣagaṇa.[35]

Both Bādarāyaṇa and Jaimini, the reputed authors of the *Brahma-* and the *Mīmāṁsā-Sūtras* are frequently quoted in both texts, and it seems improbable that an author at certain places would specifically mark a position as his own.[36] Also, many sources give not Bādarāyaṇa but Vyāsa as the author of the *Brahma-Sūtra*.

---

[33] Unfortunately, one of the more convincing arguments for this, although true, does not prove the point. In *Brahma-Sūtra* 1.1–3, where the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is frequently quoted, "these passages are explained *following the order of the chapters of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad*", says Nakamura (1950–56: 429). However, accepting Deussen's (1912: 39–46) list of the topics of *Brahma-Sūtra* (following Śaṅkara), we find that in the first *adhyāya* 28 passages of seven Upaniṣads are analysed in 97 sūtras. Most often the *Chāndogya:* 12 passages (42 sūtras); *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* 4 (12), *Kaṭha* 4 (7), *Muṇḍaka* 3 (19), *Taittirīya* 2 (9), *Kauṣītaki* 2 (7), *Praśna* 1 (1). Now already Deussen (1912: 122) underlined that "the order of the passages, as they occur in the different Upanishads, is rigidly preserved". So not only in case of the *Chāndogya* – it is the same for all the Upaniṣads, without a single exception.

Interestingly Nakamura himself (1950–56: 433) refers to this observation of Deussen.

It may be remarked that the other Upaniṣadic quotations are **not** subordinated to the references to the *Chāndogya,* even when it would be perfectly easy. E.g., *prāṇa* recurs thrice: *Brahma-Sūtra* 1.1.23 deals with it in the *Chāndogya*; 1.1.28–31 analyses it in the *Kauṣītaki*; and 1.3.39 quotes the *Kaṭha*.

[34] "Wahrscheinlich hat Patañjali aus älteren Quellen Passagen übernommen und mit Erläuterungen versehen. Die Auszüge wurden als Sūtras bezeichnet, während Erläuterungen und ergänzende Ausführungen als Bhāṣya galten."

[35] "Le roi Nāga admira beaucoup son intelligence et commença … lui exposer le Seng k'ia louen (Sāṁkhyaśāstra). […] Mais celui-ci, passant au crible ce qu'il apprenait, en jugea l'ordre défectueux et l'expression inexacte. Quant au fond, il pensa que le mieux était de le changer entièrement. Quand le cours fut fini, sa compilation l'était aussi." Takakusu (1904: 41).

[36] Jaimini at 6.3.4 in the *Mīmāṁsā-Sūtra* clearly represents an opponent's view; and Nakamura (1950–56: 406) says that "there are cases where what is given as a theory of Bādarāyaṇa is by no means coincident with the theories of the *[Brahma-]Sūtra*-author himself."

Similarly the *Nyāya-Sūtra* is said to be the work of Gotama, but sometimes of Akṣapāda; and the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* of Kaṇāda (or Kaṇabhakṣa or Kaṇabhuj), but also of Ulūka. According to Maas (2006: xii–xvii), the author of the *Yoga-Sūtra* is the same person who wrote the *Bhāṣya* thereon: so Patañjali would be identical to Vyāsa.

Although it is quite possible that one person could be remembered under several names, even without an explicit tradition connecting the different appellations, but it is not really probable in these cases. The name Vyāsa (here a Vedānta and a Yoga author, but also author of the *Vedas*, of the *Mahā-Bhārata* and of the *Purāṇas*) is especially telling: it means simply editor or arranger. I would be tempted to think that one of the names was the original author's; the other refers to a much later editor. And as it seems improbable that someone in India would think it possible to rearrange a traditional text by a great *ṛṣi,* perhaps there were any number of contributors in between the two remembered authors. So the editor had no definite settled text before him, only groups of sūtras and some independent sūtras, in different versions in the different local traditions. He had to select and arrange and could also perhaps supply the missing links, or add a "foreword" or a "table of contents" sūtra. He may have written a commentary and it is not impossible that we still have this; in most cases, it seems that we do not.

Perhaps the tradition unconsciously remembered the complexities of authorship and that is why commentators seldom name the authors, preferring references like *sūtra-kāra*, "maker of the sūtra" or *maha-rṣi*, "great sage"; or simply *āha*, "he says".

7. Conclusion

In the foregoing, I have attempted to point out how complex the histories of our Sūtras are and that even the names of the traditional authors suggest this. What remains is to delineate a plausible scenario that might not be verified but which can at least explain all the above-mentioned facts. Even though it cannot be proven, I hope that it is a more useful way of thinking about the philosophical Sūtras.

Already with the three Vedic *Saṁhitā*s, keeping up the tradition required an organized schooling system. With the addition of the *Brāhmaṇa*s, the ritual Sūtras, phonetics, grammar and all the sciences auxiliary to ritual practice, and a twelve-year long standard training, the use of the term 'university' may be justified.

When one professor tried to organise some previously less clearly delineated part of the teaching[37] into a separate one-term course, he had to arrange his material and prepare his handouts.[38] As this was a purely oral tradition, this meant making his students memorize short formulas and then giving them the lectures that could quite well be remembered with the help of the handouts. Such formulas are still widely used when we want the students to actually remember something without reference to a handbook. E.g. $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$. This does not teach (or even, strictly speaking, does not mean) anything; but if somebody has understood Pythagoras' theorem and remembers the formula, most probably he will be able to explain it to others.

---

[37] Such as Argumentation (Nyāya), Categories (Vaiśeṣika), Meditation (Yoga), Philosophy (Sāṁkhya), Textual analysis (Mīmāṁsā) or Upaniṣad-exegesis (Vedānta).

[38] This understanding of the sūtras is not new; I find it in Leggett (1992: 3): "A book of sūtra-s was little more than a collection of headings, similar to those circulated by any teacher to pupils, to be filled out by oral instructions, without which many of them can hardly be understood."

If the class was a success, the "handout" would continue to be used, and some students, later becoming professors at other universities would disseminate it – possibly under the name of the founding professor. Of course, a handout is not a sacred text, it can be freely added to, and the course could even be expanded into two terms. With no central authority to regulate this process, in the course of centuries many different handouts came into being, some old sūtras having variants or variant interpretations; new ideas were often imported from other universities but sometimes also rejected or at least ignored. Later some scholars attempted to collect and arrange all that was taught anywhere in *Āryâvarta* on the given subject, especially when written materials could already be collected.

When such an edited collection of sūtras was successful, perhaps because it was fairly systematic and comprehensive but also avoided unnecessarily confronting some rival interpretations, it came to be used in many places as a *written* text (presumably preserving the editor's name) – and that means that for some people the interpretation of some sūtras was missing or imperfect. (And of course, many continued using their own traditional group of sūtras.) When such a Sūtra text received a good written commentary and that again became generally accepted: only then can we relatively exactly speak about **the** text of the sūtras (and of their meaning), although some interpolations and variations could still occur.

In case of the Vaiśeṣika, perhaps because the edited text of the sūtras was quite unsatisfactory but already considered "fixed", the first great commentator known to us actually chose not to directly comment on the sūtras but rather to reorganise the whole stuff while constantly referring to the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* as an authority.[39] Similar motivations[40] may have lead the (first) author of the SK but instead of a pseudo-commentary he decided to versify the teaching; ironically his work has also suffered a fate somewhat similar to that of the Sūtras.

All this means that we cannot speak of "the" Sūtra text, or of its date. Even the "last recension" is somewhat misleading, as it did not automatically annihilate all the alternative versions. Sometimes they lived on for many centuries, and in textual variants they may still be partially alive.

As for the *meaning* of the sūtras, we have to accept that there may have been several. It is quite possible that the last editor was not the greatest master of the school and his understanding is not the most interesting philosophically. The commentators do not help in all cases: sometimes they differ, and even when they agree, their consensus may be secondary. Even later *sūtra-kāra*s may have misunderstood some earlier sūtras; no one had access to their "original" meaning.

This emphasizes the need for creative and intuitive interpretations. The old masters started something powerful enough to keep their handouts alive – although not intact – for millennia; we should look for these powerful ideas buried under meticulous additions and scholarly rearrangements.

[39] Although his work is generally called *Praśastapāda-Bhāṣya* (Praśastapāda's Commentary), its proper title is *Padārtha-Dharma-Saṁgraha,* Compendium of the Properties of the Categories.

[40] To all appearances the *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra* (Brief Sūtra of Principles) is a really old text, so it could have been commented upon by *Īśvarakṛṣṇa (see Chapter IX.4). However, it is but an extremely short and quite scholastic list of some categories of Sāṁkhya.

VIII. The errors of the copyists

A case study of Candrānanda's Vaiśeṣika commentary

1. A direct copy

While collecting material for a new critical edition of Candrānanda's Commentary on the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*, I realised that a recent Devanāgarī MS (J_2) is a direct copy of an older one (J_1)[1] written in the Jaina Devanāgarī script. This is nothing new, as Harunaga Isaacson already clearly formulated it in his PhD thesis in 1995:

> [T]he evidence that J_2 … is a direct descendent of J_1, very probably an immediate one, i.e. an apograph, is overwhelming. …[T]hese manuscripts agree strikingly in the matter of the formal organisation of their contents, with both giving at the outset the text of the *sūtra*s alone and following this with Candrānanda's commentary, with the *sūtra*s embedded in it. The extent to which they agree in error both in matters of substantives and accidentals is also most striking, and I think that all of J_2's divergences from J_1 can be explained as typical scribal errors. It is particularly important to note that there are cases where J_2's reading is that of J_1 *post correctionem*, with the correction in J_1 being one which can be convincingly argued to be a wrong one not based on the/an exemplar … This indicates that the close agreement of the two sources is not caused by their sharing a common ancestor, but that J_2 must indeed have descended from J_1. (Isaacson 1995: 148)

While I completely agree with Isaacson's conclusions, I think some further arguments can be added in its favour.

1) Sometimes identical corrections appear in the two manuscripts. The copyist probably did not notice the corrections at first and then later added them. For instance, in the commentary *ad* 6.2.9, the word *yadṛcchayā* is written without the first syllable, *ya,* which is added in the bottom margin in J_1 and in the right-hand margin in J_2. Or, to take another example, sūtra 4.1.6 says, "*mahaty anekadravyavattvād rūpāc côpalabdhiḥ*"; our texts in the *sūtra-pāṭha* (sūtra-only) portion, however, omit the word *rūpāt* and add it in the right hand margin. What is even more convincing is that they do not cross-reference it to the exact place in the line where the addition should be made; however, while it is natural in J_1, where the line ends *anekadravyavatvā* (and the marginal addition *drupā* follows directly), it is not so in J_2.

2) Sometimes a correction in J_1 is noticed but misinterpreted by the copyist. The sūtra 8.10 reads *dravyeṣv anitaretarakāraṇāt, kāraṇâyaugapadyāt.* In the *sūtra-pāṭha*, the scribe of J_1, quite typically of him, confuses a *t* and an *n*, and writes *atitaretara* instead of *anitaretara.* This was later emended to

---

[1] In the edition published by Jambūvijayajī (1961; hereafter in this chapter: Ed.) this MS received the siglum P.

itaretara by modifying the first *a* to *i*, then deleting the *ti* syllable. The copyist, however, failed to notice the deletion and wrote *ititaretara.*

3) At times, the copyist seems to be unable to read his source and then instead of writing a character in the usual way, he tries to draw a graphical copy of the character as written by the scribe of J_1. Although I have frequently had the feeling that this is the case, because this is, of course, a matter of subjective judgement, I will not dwell on it. An example may still be given: In the commentary *ad* 6.2.2., the *avagraha* is slightly odd in the sentence *prāṅmukho 'nnāni bhuṁjīta;* it looks more like the numeral 3. The copyist tries to draw a copy of the sign, with a result that is difficult to recognise; it is clearly not the *avagraha* that J_2 normally uses.

4) The last and decisive type of evidence consists in errors of J_2 based on the precise layout of J_1. There are several cases of this, as when a *virāma* sign or the long bottom part of a *d* is understood by the copyist as (part of) a vowel sign in the next line. However, we have here an unusually clear and striking example that is also an example of a misunderstood correction.

In the commentary to the last sūtra of the ninth *adhyāya* (9.28), we have the two words *kathayati*, and, in J_1 one line below that, *sūkṣma*. Now, the word *kathayati* is split by the empty space for the string holding together the leaves of the book: *katha---yati. Sūkṣma* was first erroneously written as *sūśma*; then *śma* was deleted and *kṣma* was added above, in the empty space for the string hole:



…hṛdayaṁme**katha**| **kṣma** **yatī**tyanavadhāraṇaphalaṁ||…
…siddhānāṁtu**sū~~śma~~**×**vyavahita**viprakṛṣṭārthaviṣayaṁyadvādi…

The copyist unfortunately did not notice the small cross (×) after the deleted *śma*, meaning "insert here", and took *kṣma* to belong where it actually stands, within *katha---yati*, and wrote *kathakṣmayati* in the first line and *sū* only in the second, resulting in the completely meaningless *…hṛdayaṁme**kathakṣmayatīty**… siddhānāṁtu**sūvyavahita**…*

As all these errors, and especially the one mentioned last, could only arise when copying J_1, they prove that J_2 is a direct descendant of the former. It is not so easy to prove that it is a direct copy, although there can again be very little doubt about that. In principle, if there were an intermediate manuscript, *J_3, between the two, we would expect roughly the same amount of errors introduced by the two copyists, and many of the new errors produced by the last copying would reflect peculiarities of *J_3. Now, what we actually find is that of the 1067 differences between J_1 and J_2 there are only seven that cannot be explained as typical scribal errors based on the text as we find it in J_1; those seven are based on free associations like *yuddhi/buddhi* and *kāraka/kāraṇa*.

Furthermore, the case of identical corrections points in the same direction. J_2 tries to copy the correct text, without showing that his original has been corrected. (There are, of course, many new mistakes, and many of these are corrected). As there are only about twenty marginal corrections in J_2, of which three are identical to corrections in J_1, it is virtually impossible that this is a mere coincidence. We would otherwise have to suppose that *J_3 reproduced those very errors and marginal corrections and then J_2 again copied them unchanged.

Thus, I assert that J_2 is a direct copy of J_1, made in 1874 (it is dated *saṁvat* 1931).

2. Errors and corrections

Now an interesting possibility presents itself: here we can study – although only on a single and relatively modern example – the process of copying. What kind of errors does the copyist make? How far does he try to correct, consciously or unconsciously, his source? I may have something interesting to say about this last question.

The copyist seems to try not to correct anything he sees in his source. He copies even absolutely trivial and striking mistakes like in the *sūtra-pāṭha* 7.2.23, where, instead of *iti cet*, he retains *iti* | *cat* (where the *daṇḍa* clearly is a mistake for the normal *e* sign in J_1, i.e., a vertical stroke before the consonant). To take another example, in both scripts *p* and *y* are very similar, frequently indistinguishable. Unfortunately, in the commentary *ad* 8.1, a very clear *y* is written by mistake in the expression *ṣaṇṇāṁ padārthānām*, and the copyist faithfully reproduces *saṇṇāṁ yadārthānāṁ*![2]

Even when he accidentally corrects something, as soon as the scribe notices it he corrects it back to the original, meaningless form; e.g., having emended unconsciously *tatadanumānaṁ* to *tad anumānaṁ*, adds in the margin the "missing" *ta*, so we have *ta*[*ta*]*danumānaṁ*[3] (*ad* 10.19).

We cannot assume that the copyist does not know Sanskrit. I think it is inherently implausible that a work of this kind could be copied without at least some feeling for the language, but here we also have some direct proof. The scribe of J_1 is not very fond of the letter *b;* he uses it only105 times, as contrasted to 4246 *v* letters (the difference between *b* and *v* is minimal in many scripts and nonexistent in several Indian pronunciations of Sanskrit.). On the other hand, the copyist obviously feels that for him the difference is important, and corrects *v* to *b* 242 times and *b* to *v* six times. He is almost always right, erring only thrice (*abhāba, parbata* and *binaṣṭa*).

Sometimes we find what could be emendations, but only six times from among the 1067 significant differences. All of them could have been introduced unintentionally; I give a list of them:

**kāraṇaguṇaiḥ* for *kārakaguṇaiḥ* (commentary *ad* 2.1.24)[4]
sūcanād for *stacanād* (*stacanād* is meaningless) (commentary *ad* 5.2.2)
śarīrasya for *śarīsya* (*śarīsya* is meaningless) (commentary *ad* 5.2.17)
**buddhiḥ* for *yuddhiḥ* (or the meaningless *puddhiḥ*; *yuddhiḥ* is possible but unattested) (commentary *ad* 10.12)
**viśeṣeṇa* for *viśeṣaṇa* (5.2.4, in the commentary)
**saṁyogâbhāve* for *saṁyogo bhāve* (5.2.3, in the *sūtra-pāṭha*)

These six examples contrast with the innumerable errors the scribe copies faithfully and the innumerable errors he himself introduces into the text. That means that the newer text contains many times more new problematic readings than easier ones. Therefore, here at least the principle of *lectio difficilior*, according to which from among two readings of a text the more difficult one is probably the original, practically always fails.

Clearly, not every case of silly scribal error can be termed *lectio difficilior*: it should be a more or less meaningful text. I think that meaningful variants normally do not arise in a single step, at least through similar processes when typically only one *akṣara* (character denoting a syllable) changes to another. In such cases, something like this may happen: meaningful original → meaningless erroneous copy (→ even more errors creeping in easily) → attempt at rectification: *lectio facilior/difficilior*.

2 Actually, this is a trivial but not meaningless error, rather an example of a *lectio difficilior* that is not the correct reading. For the original is clearly the first ("Of the six categories") and not the version of J, "When of the six objects".

3 [ ] signifies an insertion by the scribe, as explained below, p. 88.

4 In the sūtra, *kāraṇaguṇa* is clearly written.

The case analysed here represents only a single step in this process; nevertheless, it seems possible to point out the appearance of several cases of almost-meaningful corruptions. In the following examples, the abbreviations J_1S and J_2S refer to the separate *sūtra-pāṭha* portions of J_1 and J_2; [ ] signifies addition by the scribe, < > a deletion; x stands for an illegible part of an *akṣara*. The part that is of interest is printed in bold. First I give the sentence as found in the published edition, then J_1 followed by J_2, its copy.

Here are those cases where the variant of J_2 could reasonably be called the easier reading:

1) *iha ye sparśavatāṁ viśeṣaguṇā ekaikendriyagrāhyās te* ***kāraṇa****guṇaiḥ kārye niṣpādyante*| (Ed. *ad* 2.1.24)
iha ye sparśavatāṁ viśeṣaguṇā ekaikeṁdriyagrāhyās te<ḥ> ***kāraka****guṇaiḥ kārye niḥpādyaṁte* (J_1)
iha ye sparśavatāṁ viśeṣaguṇā| ekaikeṁdriyagrāhyās te ***kāraṇa****guṇaiḥ kārye niḥpādyate* (J_2)

2) *kāryaṁ dravyaṁ guṇān karma vā samavetaṁ dravye paśyato "dravyaṁ kāraṇam" iti mukhyā* ***buddhiḥ****, kāryasya jātatvāt*| (Ed. *ad* 10.12)
kāryaṁ dravyaguṇāḥ karma vā samavetaṁ dravyaṁ paśyato dravyaṁ kāraṇam iti mukhyā ***yuddhiḥ*** *kāryasya jātatvāt*| (J_1)
kāryaṁ dravyaguṇāḥ karma vā samavetaṁ dravye paśyato dravyaṁ kāraṇam iti mukhyā ***buddhiḥ*** *kāryasya jātatvāt* (J_2)

3) *tad* ***viśeṣeṇā****dṛṣṭakāritam*| 5.2.4 (Ed.)
*tad****viśeṣaṇā****dṛṣṭakāritaṁ*| (J_1)
tad ***viśeṣeṇā****dṛṣṭakāritaṁ* (J_2)

4) *apāṁ* ***saṁyogābhāve*** *gurutvāt patanam*| 5.2.3 (Ed.)
apāṁ ***saṁyogo bhāve*** *gurutvāt patanaṁ[|] (*J_1S)
apāṁ ***saṁyogābhāve*** *gurutvāt patanaṁ* (J_2S)

Now, in all these cases, the *lectio facilior* agrees with the edition, and Jambūvijayajī is probably right (although case 3 is not clear): therefore, here we do not find a preferable difficult reading.

Let us have a look at the possible new *lectiones difficiliores:*

1) ***saṁśleṣād vāyor*** *anekatvam anumīyate*| (Ed. *ad* 2.1.14)
***saṁśleṣād v[ā]yor anekatvam anumīyate*| (J_1)**
saṁśleṣārddhayor *anekatvam anumīyate* (J_2)

2) *ataḥ saṁśayaḥ „kim ayaṁ sthāṇuḥ syāt puruṣo na* ***vā" iti***| (Ed. *ad* 2.2.19)
ataḥ saṁśayaḥ kim ayaṁ sthāṇuḥ puruṣo na ***veti***| (J_1)
ataḥ saṁśayaḥ kim ayaṁ sthāṇuḥ puruṣo na ***vetti*** (J_2)

3) *śarīraviśeṣād yathā* ***dṛṣṭād na*** *tadīye sukhādāv asmadādīnāṁ jāyate jñānaṁ* | (Ed. *ad* 3.2.14)
śarīraviśeṣād yathā ***dṛṣṭān na*** *tadīye sukhādāv asmadādīnāṁ jāyatejñānaṁ* (J_1)
śarīraviśeṣād yathā ***dṛṣṭānta****tadīyasukhādāv asmadādīnāṁ jāyate jñānaṁ* (J_2)

4) *evaṁ* ***dravyāṇy uktvā*** *nityatvam upalabdhyanupalabdhī ca* (Ed., introduction to 4.1.1)
evaṁ ***dravyāxyuktvā*** *nityatvam upalavdhyanupalavdhī ca* (J_1)
*evaṁ****dravyāṁ yuktvā*** *nityatvam upaladhvyanupalabdhī ca* (J_2)

5) *na hy araṇī agneḥ kāraṇam api* ***tu svāvayavā*** *eva,* (Ed. *ad* 6.1.6)
na hy araṇī agneṣ kāraṇam api ***tu svāvayavā*** *eva*| (J_1)
na hy araṇī agneṣ kāraṇam api ***tustāva yayā*** *eva* (J_2)

6) *ātmano 'dhikaguṇena śatruṇā* ***prāptasyātmana*** *eva ripuprayukto vadho 'ṅgīkāryaḥ*| (Ed. *ad* 6.1.18)
ātmano dhikaguṇena śa<k>[t]ruṇā ***prāptasyātmana*** *eva ripuprayukto vadho ṅgīkāryaḥ[|]* (J_1)
ātmano dhikaguṇena śakṣuṇā ***prāpte syāt mana*** *eva ripu| prayukto vadho ṅgīkāryaḥ* (J_2)

7) ***ātmeti*** *manaḥ, manaḥkarmasu tadabhāve saṁyogābhāvo 'prādurbhāvaś ca sa mokṣa* (Ed. *ad* 6.2.19)
ātmeti *manaḥ manaḥkarmasu tadabhāve saṁyogābhāvo prādurbhāvaś ca sa mokṣa* (J_1)
ātmani *manaḥ manaḥkarmasu tadabhāve saṁyogābhāvo prādurbhāvaś ca sa mokṣa* (J_2)

8) ***bhāktam*** *ekatvaṁ guṇādiṣv iti cet,* (introuction to 7.2.7)
bhāktam *ekatvaṁ guṇādiṣv iti cet||* (J_1)
bhoktam *ekatvaṁ guṇādiṣv iti cet* (J_2)

9) *yogajadharmāpekṣād* ***ātmāntaḥkaraṇa****saṁyogād viśiṣṭāt tatrabhavatāṁ svasminn ātmani jñānaṁ pratyakṣam utpadyate|* (Ed. *ad* 9.13)
yogajadharmāpekṣād ***ātmāntaḥkaraṇa****saṁyogād viśiṣṭāt| tatrabhavatā svasminn ātmani jñānaṁ pratyakṣam utpadyate||* (J_1)
yogajadharmāpekṣād ***ātmātaḥ karaṇa****saṁyogād viśiṣṭāt tatrabhavatā svasminn ātmani jñānaṁ pratyakṣam utpadyate* (J_2)

10) *evaṁ śabdaḥ kāraṇaṁ sad arthasya* ***pratipattau*** *liṅgaṁ kuta iti cet,* (Ed., intro to 9.21)
evaṁ śabdaḥ kāraṇaṁ sad arthasya ***pratipattau*** *liṁgaṁ kuta iti cet|* (J_1)
evaṁ śabdaḥ kāraṇaṁ sad arthasya ***pratipatnau*** *liṁgaṁ kuta iti cet* (J_2)

11) *janiṣyamāṇe 'pi kārye* ***tantvādīnāṁ*** *parasparеṇa saṁyogād asya paṭaṁ prati teṣu kāraṇabuddhir utpadyate|* (Ed. *ad* 10.13)
janiṣyamāṇe pi kārye| ***taṁtvādīnāṁ*** *parasparеṇa saṁyogād asya paṭaṁ prati teṣu kāraṇavuddhir utpadyate||* (J_1)
janiṣyamāṇe pi kārye ***tatvādīnāṁ*** *parasparеṇa saṁyogād asya paṭaprati teṣu kāraṇabuddhir utpadyate* (J_2)

12) *jagato 'syānandakaraṁ vidyā****śarvaryā*** *sadaiva yaś candram|*
ānandayati sa vṛttiṁ candrānando vyadhād etām|| (Ed., concluding verse)
*j<ā>[a]gato syānaṁdakaraṁ vidyā****sarvvaryā[ḥ]*** *sadaiva yaś caṁdraṁ|*
ānaṁdayati sa vṛttiṁ caṁdrānaṁdo vyadhād etāṁ|| (J_1)
*jagato syānaṁdakaraṁ vidyā****sarvvayā*** *sadaiva yaś caṁdraṁ*
ānaṁdayati sa vṛttiṁ caṁdrānaṁdo vyadhād etāṁ|| (J_2)

13) *prayatna****viśeṣān*** *nodanaviśeṣaḥ|* 5.1.9 (Ed.)
*prayatna****viśeṣān*** *[n]odanaviśeṣaḥ* (J_1S)
*prayatna****viśeṣo*** *nodanaviśeṣaḥ* (J_2S)

14) *jñānanirddeśe jñāna****niṣpatir***[5] *uktā|* 8.3 (Ed.)
*jñānanirdeśo jñāna****niṣpattir*** *uktā||* (J_1)
*jñānanirdeśo jñāna****niṣpatir*** *uktā* (J_2)

15) *tadvacanād āmnāyaprāmāṇyam iti|* 10.21 (Ed.)
tadvacanād āmnāyaprāmāṇyaṁ ***<tadvaca>nādānnāya****prāmāṇyam iti||* (J_1S)
tadvacanād āmnāyaprāmāṇyaṁ ***nādāntāya*** *prāmāṇyam iti* (J_2S)

Although in some of these cases, one might hesitate whether the variant is meaningful or not, the overall picture is, nevertheless, fairly uniform: there was not a single case where the *lectio difficilior* would be the preferable reading.

3. Conclusion

My impression is that the case studied here, where from among the readings changed in the copying it was always the *lectio facilior* that was the (more) original reading, is not unique. The approach of the Indian scribe (or at least of some Indian scribes) may have been quite different from that attested to in

[5] Clearly a misprint for *niṣpattir*.

Latin and Greek studies. He might have had a consciously humble and reverential attitude to his text, like that of a *śiṣya* (pupil) towards his *guru*. In our case it is clear that his task was not to create a correct text but to create an exact copy. He was not copying sentences (that could easily lead to easier readings) but words. As his *exemplar* (as is typical for Indian manuscripts) is written without spaces, and due to other factors as well, he very frequently could not identify the words and then he copied the text letter by letter. This approach may not have been universal in India but perhaps it was typical in the transmission of texts difficult to understand. Early philosophical texts, notably the Sūtras clearly belong to this category (see Chapter XI, pp. 129–130). As the unit of copying is not the sentence but the word or even the *akṣara*, the probability of an easier reading is very low – the expected result of errors is a reading either meaningless or highly improbable. However, there is some chance that a new word erroneously written by the scribe will be one that occurs in the text or at least fits the context; this way new *lectiones difficiliores* can occur.

If my tentative interpretation is not completely wrong, the applicability of the principle to prefer the more difficult reading should be seriously questioned in Indian studies, especially for old or obscure texts. If the principle does have a role to play, perhaps this fact should be demonstrated – either for single cases or for certain genres. Such a demonstration could work in the same way as the one followed here. Considering all those cases where on grounds other than the relative difficulty of the readings we could choose from among the variants, a statistical analysis would show how frequently it was the *lectio difficilior* that we had chosen.

After all, it is a matter of objective fact, and not of *a priori* principles, whether a given tradition produces easier or more difficult readings in the course of passing on a text through the ages.

IX. Pain and its cure

The aim of philosophy in Sāṁkhya

The central text of the Sāṁkhya philosophy is undoubtedly Īśvarakṛṣṇa's *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* (SK; 4–5th century CE). It is written, in happy contrast to the sūtras of the other *darśana*s, in clear and lucid verse. Most of the 72 *āryā* couplets are readily understandable and there is little debate among classical and modern commentators on their purport. Still, some verses are less straightforward and different interpretations have been suggested for them.

Now *kārikā* 1 is not one of these: all the commentators agree on its meaning and there is only an insignificant difference on the exact reading of the text. The reason for this concord is, however, quite the opposite of that expected: Īśvarakṛṣṇa is here writing in conformity to the accepted sūtra-style (I take it to be an intentional stylistic device), and the result is a singularly cryptic sentence. The reference of some terms is so unclear that everybody accepted without much hesitation the interpretation given by the first commentator so that now there is a whole body of weighty authority behind this understanding.

In this chapter, I will attempt to consider some arguments that question the reliability and acceptability of the tradition as well as suggesting an alternative hypothesis.

1. The text of SK 1

1. From the blows of the triad of suffering [arises] the inquiry into the means of repelling it;
   "It being seen, that is useless" – if [you say so, I say] "No", because that is not absolute and final.[1]

The minor textual variant *abhighātaka*, 'removing' instead of *apaghātaka*, 'repelling' does not influence the meaning; and the translation of *jijñāsā* with 'desire to know' instead of 'inquiry' or 'investigation' is mostly a matter of taste, though I think it is a good idea to emphasise the central element *jñā*, i.e. to know.

Hetu, normally 'cause', here stands for 'means', as already suggested by the commentator Gauḍapāda (ca. 6th century CE) – he paraphrases it with *upāya*). The shared meaning element is "an action that leads up to some result". As we will see later, it is not unusual to use *hetu* in this sense in similar contexts. The locative case here denotes the object of the inquiry; in the second line, however

---

[1] *Duḥkha-trayâbhighātāj jijñāsā tad-apaghātake hetau.*
Dṛṣṭe sâpārthā cen, nâikāntâtyantato 'bhāvāt.

it is best to take it as a locative absolute. Though *sā,* 'that', clearly refers back to the inquiry, in this case the locative cannot signify its object. (Then the meaning would be, "An inquiry into visible means is useless" – and probably Īśvarakṛṣṇa would readily agree to this, but in our text, he says "No".) So *dṛṣṭe* is an elliptical locative absolute, *hetau* being supplied from the first line: "[the means] having been seen". This is also suggested by the analysis of the commentary *Jaya-Maṅgalā*[2]: "It would be so if there were no means to drive it away that were already seen… Therefore as there is a method seen, the inquiry in this area is useless."[3]

The adverbial construction at the end, *ekāntâtyantatas,* 'absolutely and finally', probably qualifies *apaghāta*, repelling the blows of suffering, and not *hetu*, the means for it; again, this is the analysis of Gauḍapāda: "Because absolutely (necessarily) and finally (forever) warding off is not possible through visible means."[4] Therefore, a loose rendering of verse 1 could be something like this:

> Three kinds of suffering afflict us. Therefore, we inquire after the means to drive them away. To the objection, "The inquiry is needless, for the method has been seen", we answer, "It is not so, because that method will not lead to absolute and final relief."

2. Three questions and their traditional answers

The only point sufficiently clear is that the suggested inquiry will be Sāṁkhya philosophy itself: so the aim of philosophy according to Sāṁkhya is freedom forever from suffering. However, there still remain three questions that we have to ask: a) What are those three kinds of suffering? b) What is the visible (or seen) method to counteract them? c) Why does Īśvarakṛṣṇa reject this method?

Although the *Kārikā* itself offers not the slightest clue, all the commentators[5] (including those of the parallel passages in the *Sāṁkhya-Sūtra*, I.1-2 and in the *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra*[6]) agree in their answers to these questions almost verbally. a) The three kinds of suffering are of internal, external and of divine origin. b) The visible method is the application of different remedies and prevention, such as medicine, comfort or precautions. c) Īśvarakṛṣṇa rejects these methods because they are not fully certain and reliable, further their effect is temporary only – so they alleviate but do not solve the problem. – On account of the great similarity, it seems sufficient to quote Gauḍapāda:

> There the triad of suffering is: relating to oneself, relating to the creatures and relating to the gods [or fate]. There 'relating to oneself' is of two kinds: bodily and mental. 'Bodily' is fever, dysentery, etc. caused by the abnormality of wind, bile and phlegm. 'Mental' is separation from the pleasant and union with the unpleasant, etc.
>
> 'Relating to the creatures' is of four kinds, caused by the world of living beings; it arises from men, domestic and wild animals, birds, serpents, gad-flies, gnats, lice, bugs, fish, crocodiles, sharks, plants – being born from the womb, from egg, from sweat [i.e. insects] or from the sprout.
>
> 'Relating to the gods' (*ādhi-daivika*): *Daiva* may be 'divine' (belonging to the gods, *deva*s) or 'heavenly' (originating from heaven, *div-*). Whatever arises with reference to that, as cold, heat, rain or the falling of the thunderbolt.

---

2 Attributed to the Vedāntin Śaṅkara. His authorship is improbable, but the age of the commentary may be roughly the same, i.e. ca. 8th century CE.

3 *Syād etad, yadi dṛṣṭas tad-avaghātako hetur na syāt… Tataś ca dṛṣṭe hetau sati, jijñāsā 'smin viṣaye nirarthikā.*

4 *Yata ekāntato ('vaśyam) atyantato (nityaṁ) dṛṣṭena hetunā abhighāto na bhavati.*

5 Potter–Larson (1987: 152); see Larson–Bhattacharya (1987) *passim.*

6 Either *ad* sūtra 6 (*adhyātmam adhibhūtam adhidaivaṁ ca*), or with a separate sūtra 21, *trividhaṁ duḥkham*, added at the end of the text (perhaps in the 16th century, see fn. 46).

So it is that **on account of the blows of the triad of suffering an inquiry** is to be made. Into what? **Into the means of repelling it**: Into that cause which drives away that triad of suffering.

“It being seen, that is useless” – if [you say so]: The cause driving away the triad of suffering being seen, that enquiry is useless. ‘If’: in case. There a method relating to oneself is in fact seen for both kinds of the twofold suffering relating to oneself by performing the precepts of medicine: by union with the pleasant and avoiding the unpleasant; and by pungent, bitter, astringent etc. decoctions etc. The warding off [of the suffering] relating to the creatures is seen by protection etc.

“It being seen, that is useless” – if you think so, [we answer] **No, because that is not absolute and final**. Because absolutely (certainly) and finally (forever) warding off is not possible by visible means, therefore an inquiry (investigation) is to be made into a means warding off [suffering] absolutely and finally.[7]

3. Doubts about the commentarial interpretation

The analysis of suffering into internal, external and divine strikes me as rather odd. It seems quite unjustified philosophically, functionally and also historically. It is not a natural analysis, so I would expect to see some justification, i.e. some role for it, but it has none. It does not appear either directly or indirectly anywhere in the text later, not even according to the commentaries.[8]

Logically it is incoherent, as divine and “relating to the creatures” form clearly a single category, external, as opposed to internal. Many Sāṁkhya authors have noticed this, perhaps starting with Vācaspati Miśra: “Suffering that can be cured by external means is in two ways – relating to the creatures and relating to the gods.”[9] As suffering ‘relating to oneself’ is also of two kinds, one feels that either we should speak of two main types only or of four smaller divisions.[10]

---

[7] *Tatra duḥkha-trayam: ādhyātmikam, ādhibhautikam, ādhidaivikaṁ cêti. Tatrâdhyātmikaṁ dvi-vidham: śārīraṁ, mānasaṁ cêti. Śārīraṁ vāta-pitta-śleṣma-viparyaya-kr̥taṁ, jvarâtīsārâdi. Mānasaṁ priya-viyogâpriya-saṁyogâdi.*

Ādhibhautikaṁ catur-vidha-bhūta-grāma-nimittaṁ: manuṣya-paśu-mr̥ga-pakṣi-sarīsr̥pa-daṁśa-maśaka-yūkā-matkuṇa-matsya-makara-grāha-sthāvarebhyo jarāyujâṇḍaja-svedajôdbhijjebhyaḥ sakāśād upajāyate.

Ādhidaivikam: devānām idaṁ daivam, divaḥ prabhavatîti vā daivam; tad adhikr̥tya yad upajāyate – śītôṣṇa-vāta-varṣâśanipātâdikaṁ.

*Evaṁ yathā **duḥkha-trayâbhighātāt jijñāsā** kāryā. Kva? **Tad-abhighātake hetau**: tasya duḥkha-trayasya abhighātako yo hetus, tatrêti.*

***Dr̥ṣṭe sā 'pārthā cet**: Dr̥ṣṭe hetau duḥkha-trayâbhighātake sā jijñāsā apārthā. Ced: yadi. Tatrâdhyātmikasya dvi-vidhasyâpi āyurveda-śāstra-kriyayā priya-samāgamâpriya-parihāra-kaṭu-tikta-kaṣāyâdi-kvāthâdibhiḥ dr̥ṣṭa evâdhyātmi-kôpāyaḥ* [ed.: *-āḥ*]. *Ādhibhautikasya rakṣâdinā 'bhighāto dr̥ṣṭaḥ.*

*Dr̥ṣṭe sā 'pârthā ced evaṁ manyase: **na, ekāntâtyantato 'bhāvāt**. Yata ekāntato ('vaśyaṁ) atyantato (nityaṁ) dr̥ṣṭena hetunā abhighāto na bhavati, tasmād anyatra ekāntâtyantâbhighātake hetau jijñāsā (vividiṣā) kāryêti.*

[8] Except, of course, in verse 51, where we have *duḥkha-vighātās trayaḥ*, the three kinds of repelling suffering. Here all commentaries say that these are ways of counteracting the three kinds of suffering mentioned in *kārikā* 1. It is absurd – the very aim of the whole system is said to be accomplished by just three of the eight *siddhi*s, perfections!

[9] *Bāhyôpāya-sādhyaṁ duḥkhaṁ dvedhā: ādhibhautikam ādhidaivikaṁ ca.* (*Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Kaumudī*, p.68.) – Kavirāja Yati in his *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Pradīpa* (p. 96) follows Vācaspati closely. Similarly, the *Samāsa-Sūtra-Sarvôpakāriṇī Ṭīkā* (pp. 60–61) opposes *āntaram… āntarôpāya-sādhya[m]* with *bāhyabheda-dvayam… bāhyôpāya-sādhya[m],* i.e. the internal suffering curable through internal means and the two kinds of external suffering curable by external methods.

[10] The *Yukti-Dīpikā* questions whether *duḥkha* can be divided at all, and if a division is made according to its causes, why we do not get an infinite number of sufferings.

Steiner (2007) in his paper reflected on my earlier presentation of this argument (Ruzsa 1997a) and defended the commentarial interpretation. Some answers to his objections will be given in the footnotes. He thinks (pp. 510–512) that the fact that the particular categories *ādhyātmika* etc. were not called into question in the *Yukti-Dīpikā* shows that they were unproblematic – here I cannot follow him. However, even accepting this, it would not affect my argument since I

The subdivision of *ādhyātmika* into mental and physical suffering suggests a more natural analysis, where troubles of the mind and pains of the body would be the main categories. Then of course, both could be caused by internal or external factors – but this approach is not found in the commentaries. In any case, the cursory mentioning of humans as one item only in the long list of the beings that cause us suffering (animals, gnats, sharks…) seems quite absurd.

If Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa really intended to refer to this unusual list,[11] he surely should have made himself clear about it. Moreover, I think that the position of *duḥkha-traya,* the triad of suffering in the treatise as an absolute starting-point clearly requires it to be something widely known and evidently acceptable to everyone. However, this analysis of suffering was anything but well known.

Further, the terms used do not square well with the *Kārikā*'s text as we have it. *Ādhyātmika* occurs in verse 50 as one group of the *tuṣṭi*s, 'contentments'; there its opposite is, quite logically, *bāhya*, external. *Daiva* and *bhautika* both appear in verse 53, but their relation is again different: there we hear about the creation of the beings (*bhautika sarga*), and its sub-categories, again quite logically, divine, animal and human world. So the terms *do* occur in our text, but not together; they do not and cannot form a triad; and the context is quite different.[12]

Historically the terms would suggest some connection to the Upaniṣadic *adhy-ātmam* and *adhi-daivam*. These are the regular expressions to contrast the microcosmic and macrocosmic reference of a concept, which is the favourite idea of the Upaniṣads, culminating in the *ātman – Brahman* identity. So they form a natural *pair*. Only in one place (*Br̥hadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* III.7.14–15) do we find *adhi-bhūtam* interposed, and there rather unfunctionally.[13]

In the *Mokṣa-Dharma* there is a passage (MBh XII.301.1–23) which utilises this triad; there *adhy-ātmam* is always an organ (e.g. hand, eye, mind), *adhi-bhūtam* is its object (e.g. what is to be done,

---

suggest that the commentaries, including the *Yukti-Dīpikā*, do think (mistakenly) that the triad *ādhyātmika* etc. was Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's original division.

[11] Steiner (2007: 512–513) suggests that Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa may have had no particular triad in mind, the three kinds of suffering merely expressing the totality of suffering. Of all places, this would be strangest in Sāṁkhya, 'the system giving the numbers (*saṁkhyā*)'.

[12] Steiner (2007: 512) seems to suggest that it just happens that the same categories (used for different purposes) are grouped differently; perhaps they are inherited from different branches of the tradition. – Although this can never be excluded, we normally try to interpret a continuous text as coherent. In any case the triple suffering in the text is not presented as belonging to one branch only of the school, not even as peculiar to Sāṁkhya. The question (what can we do against suffering) will be answered in three different ways, and only the last and best answer will be Sāṁkhya philosophy. Before that option is selected, we cannot expect Sāṁkhya-specific approaches.

[13] Steiner (2007) thinks that *adhi-bhūtam* is functional here: Yājñavalkya answers a question where this world and the next and all beings (*bhūta*) are mentioned. – But in his answer, he is not using this triad: he lists first the macro- then the microcosmic elements; if arranged in pairs, they would be: wind–breath, fire–speech, sun–sight, directions–hearing, moon–mind, earth–skin, water–semen, ether–soul. (See Chapter II.2.) The contrast is *not* between this world and the next.

Between the two lists (but unrelated to them) we find inserted "all beings" – at least in the Kāṇva recension. In the Mādhyaṁdina recension we have "all worlds, all Vedas, all sacrifices, all beings", and therefore no triad at all. The full list of 'relating to' categories here is *adhi-devatam, adhi-lokam, adhi-vedam, adhi-yajñam, adhi-bhūtam,* and *adhy-ātmam.* This corresponds exactly to another list in the question (the person who knows the answer knows Brahman, the worlds, the gods, the Vedas, the sacrifices, the beings, the self: he knows all), with 'Brahman' and 'all' omitted for obvious reasons.

So the natural microcosm-macrocosm pairing was extended with an eye to this part of the question; and the insertion does not make a real, meaningful triad or hexad at all.

Interestingly a very close parallel to the longer list of the Mādhyaṁdinas occurs in the MBh (13.16.18c-f) with *adhi-pauruṣam* (relating to manliness?) added and *vijñāna* (knowledge) replacing *Veda* (Knowledge).

Adhi-pauruṣam, adhy-ātmam, adhi-bhūtâdhi-daivatam,
adhi-lokyâdhi-vijñānam, adhi-yajñas tvam eva hi.

colour, what is to be thought) and *adhi-daivatam* is a tutelary deity (e.g. *Indra*, *Sūrya*, *Candramas*). A similar account is found in the *Āśvamedhika-parvan* (MBh XIV.42.27–40) with the corresponding elements (*bhūta*) prefixed to the triads containing the senses, e.g. light–eye–colour–Sun. In other places we find the triad with *adhi-yajña*, 'relating to sacrifice' added (*Bhagavad-Gītā* 7.29–8.4 = MBh VI.29.29–30.4).[14] The MBh is an important source of our knowledge about early Sāṁkhya, so these occurrences seem relevant. However, we have more direct proof of the triad's importance in the Sāṁkhya tradition: it occurs in the *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra* in exactly the same role as that found in the *Mokṣa-Dharma.*

4. The testimony of the *Tattva-Samāsa*

The extremely short *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra* ("Summary of the principles") is one of the three 'root texts' of Sāṁkhya[15]: they are considered the works of ancient sages (in this case, Kapila) and many commentaries[16] and even subcommentaries were written on them. The sixth sūtra in the *Tattva-Samāsa* reads, *Adhyātmam, adhibhūtam, adhidaivataṁ ca*, "relating to oneself, relating to the beings and relating to the divinities" – which, although phonetically slightly different, is clearly the triad we are looking for.

Unfortunately, most scholars consider the text very late;[17] e.g., Potter (1995, item 776.1) dates it to 1300, Larson–Bhattacharya (1987: 16) to ca.1300–1400. The only reason for this dating seems to be that it is not mentioned in Mādhavācārya's *Sarva-Darśana-Saṁgraha* ("Compendium of all philosophies", ca. 1380).[18] But in fact, we have known for more than 80 years that this dating is untenable; it will be instructive to see how this information came to be disregarded.

The age of the Bhagavad-Ajjuka

We read in Larson–Bhattacharya (1987: 318):

> [T]here are a few hints… that the *Tattvasamāsa* may be independent of the large *Sāṁkhyasūtra* and possibly somewhat earlier. … Chakravarti cites an old Jain text (perhaps from **the eighth or ninth century**), the *Bhagavadajjukiyam,* in which… *sūtras* 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 10 of the *Tattvasamāsa*… all find their place. … It only establishes that there were certain old utterances circulating in the ancient period.

---

[14] Very interestingly here the context is "deliverance from old age and death", *jarā-maraṇa-mokṣāya* (MBh VI.29.29a). The interpretation of the terms: *adhy-ātmam* is the essence (*sva-bhāva*), *adhi-bhūtam* is the perishable existence (*kṣaro bhāvaḥ*), *adhi-daivatam* is the person (*puruṣa*) and *adhi-yajña* is Kṛṣṇa present in the body of every being.

Steiner (2007: 515–516) draws our attention to a triad in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (X.2.6.16–18), where *adhi-yajñam* replaces *adhi-bhūtam*: there the year is *adhi-devatam*, fire is *adhi-yajñam* and man (*puruṣa*) is *adhy-ātmam*.

[15] The others are the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* and the longest and latest *Sāṁkhya-(Pravacana-)Sūtra.*

[16] Potter (1995, item 776.1) lists eleven commentaries of the *Tattva-Samāsa.*

[17] Only Max Müller (1899: 294–300) thought that it might be a truly ancient text, earlier at least than the SK.

[18] This argument is weightless. Mādhavācārya in the Sāṁkhya chapter quotes *only* the SK and Vācaspati Miśra's commentary on it (and a verse "by Sāṁkhya masters", *sāṁkhyācāryaiḥ*, also quoted by Vācaspati from "the old masters of Sāṁkhya", *sāṁkhyavṛddhāḥ*). – He also does not mention in the Vaiśeṣika chapter Praśastapāda, Vyomaśiva or Udayana; Śrīdhara is mentioned once, but as holding an opinion on darkness that is contrary to the Vaiśeṣika position. (Praśastapāda is cursorily mentioned in the chapter on Buddhism, and Udayana is frequently quoted in the Nyāya chapter.) – Or, for that matter, Mādhava never refers anywhere to Nāgārjuna, Vasubandhu or Diṅnāga. In fact, considering his method it would be quite unexplainable if he had referred to this small text with not a single identifiable philosophical position.

Now Chakravarti (1951: 169)[19] in fact gives a somewhat earlier date for the "Jaina text":

> [I]t may not be impossible that the author of the Bhagavadajjukīyam had in his mind the Tattvasamāsa-sūtras while composing the said passage. If this be the case then these *sūtras* were in existence even before the eight century A.D., for the author Bodhāyana Kavi of that Jaina text is mentioned in the inscription of the Pahlava king Mahendravikrama Varman who belonged to **the eighth century** A.D.

His properly quoted source, Chintamani (1929: 145–146) speaks of a still earlier date:

> [W]e find extracts from this Tattvasamāsa quoted in a work which belongs to the period of Mahendravikramavarman, the famous Pallava King of Kāñcī, in the 7th century of the Christian Era. The work called Bhagavadajjukam attributed to one Bodhāyana Kavi is mentioned in the Māmaṇḍūr inscription of the Pallava King (*i.e.*) Mahendravikramavarman. … The word [Bhagavadajjukam] occurs along with others (*i.e.*) Mattavilāsa etc. … Consequently we find that the Bhagavadajjukam belongs to a period **earlier than the 7th century** A. D.

So in just two steps, "earlier than the 7th century" gets transformed into "perhaps from the eighth or ninth century", while a nice comedy changes into an old Jain text,[20] and the occurrence of the title of the play in the inscription is replaced by the mentioning of its author…

Chintamani, without naming his sources, actually does little more than combine the information in Sastri (1928: 34, "in the stone inscription at Māmuṇḍūr, which has been proved to be that of Mahendra-vikrama, Bhagavadajjukam and Mattavilāsa are mentioned in company") with the remark of Winternitz made in his preface to the *Bhagavad-Ajjukīya* (pp. v–vi):

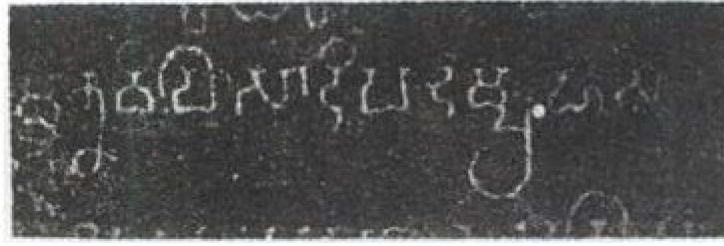
> In the passage where Śāṇḍilya mistakes Sāṁkhya for Buddhist theories, he mentions 8 prakr̥tis, 16 vikāras, ātman, 5 winds, 3 guṇas, manas, saṁcara and pratisaṁcara. The two last terms do not occur in the Sāṁkhyakārikā, but only in the Tattvasamāsa, which is not considered to be an old text, though its date is quite uncertain.

The first person to notice the importance of the inscription, identifying it as belonging to Mahendra-(Vikrama-)Varman I, and (through correspondence with Gopinatha Rao) recognising the name of the play *Matta-Vilāsa* was Jouveau-Dubreuil (1917: 38–40). His identification seems to be convincing and has been accepted unanimously. This important Pallava king reigned in the first third of the seventh century; Kulke–Rothermund (1998: 105) dates him to "c. 600–630", while Lockwood (2001: 193) says that "he flourished around 600 A.D."

The inscription in the cave-temple at Māmuṇṭūr, some 15 kilometres from Kāñcī (the Pallava capital), is badly damaged; no complete sentence can be read on it. Jouveau-Dubreuil (1917: 38) claims to have read the word "Mattavilâsâdipadamprahasana" and even gave a reproduction of this part of the text:

[19] His further argument (p. 170) for the earliness of the *Tattva-Samāsa* is that its *Krama-Dīpikā* commentary seems to be quoted from by Prajñākaramati (ca. 975 CE). However, this does not hold, for the verse quoted there appears also in the *Jaya-Maṅgalā* (p.86), while in the *Krama-Dīpikā* it looks clearly like a quotation. I think that the *Krama-Dīpikā* is not an early text at all (17th century?).

[20] Strangely enough, Chakravarti was mislead by the occurrence of the word "Jina" immediately after the *Tattva-Samāsa* quotation. In fact, in the text it refers to the Buddha, and further it is a silly mistake of the student, pointed out immediately by the master. Not a single Jaina person or quotation occurs in the play.



On the photograph, *mattavilāsādipadamprahasa* is clearly legible. The *Matta-Vilāsa* is undoubtedly Mahendravarman's work; in the prologue, the director says about the author of the play: "Chief mountain of the empire of the Pallava dynasty… such was the illustrious Siṁhavishṇuvarman, whose son, the poet… is that illustrious Mahārājah named Mahēndravikramavarman!"[21]

Most reports say that before *Matta-Vilāsa, Bhagavad-Ajjuka* can be seen on the inscription. Lockwood (2001: 240) gives a full transcription of what he could read. According to him, the sixth line of the inscription is:

n[ā]rīñca nāṭakam || vyāsakalpasya… bhagavadajjukā…syammattavilāsādipadamprahasanōttama.

I have not seen the inscription myself, but from a photography it appears that three syllables are missing between the titles of the two plays. From Lockwood's transcript, it is perfectly clear that we have here three *śloka* lines; they could be filled in e.g. as:

×××××××× ××nārīñ ca nāṭakam ||

vyāsakalpasya *vidvāṁso* Bhagavad-Ajjukā*t paraṁ* |
*hā*syam Matta-Vilāsâdi-padam prahasanôttamam ||

This could mean something like: [he wrote] "…and the play, '… Lady'; // superior to the *Bhagavad-Ajjuka* of the scholar comparable to Vyāsa [the author of the *Mahā-Bhārata*], / the best, funny comedy with the first word *Matta-Vilāsa.*"

Since besides Vyāsa, other authors like Vālmīki and Bharata also appear in the inscription, it is not inherently improbable that the *Bhagavad-Ajjuka* would be some other poet's work, mentioned for comparison or as a source of inspiration. In the play itself, no hint of the author is given; however, some manuscripts attribute it to Bodhāyana Kavi. In addition, a commentary (written around the beginning of the 17th century) starts with the verse: "I now expound the hidden meanings contained in the famous work written by Bodhāyana Kavi called Bhagavadajjuka, which is too inscrutable to be otherwise represented dramatically."[22] Warder (1989–2004: II. 334–335) thinks that the play is roughly contemporaneous with Bhāsa so it was written about the 2nd century CE. On the other hand, Lockwood in the introduction to his edition and translation of the *Bhagavad-Ajjuka* (Lockwood–Bhat 1991: 13–19) argues forcefully for Mahendra-Varman's authorship. His arguments have been rejected after due consideration by Ramaratnam (1987: 78–83), who suggests a slightly earlier date (6th century), but on not very convincing grounds.[23] The question must remain unsettled; whenever the comedy was written, it was famous already before 630 CE.

---

[21] Lockwood–Bhat (1991: 76)

[22] Anujan Achan's translation in his Introduction to the edition of the *Bhagavad-Ajjukīya*, p. xx. The Sanskrit text (p. 1):

Bodhāyana-Kavi-racite vikhyāte Bhagavad-Ajjukâbhihite
abhineye 'ti-gabhīre viśadān adhunā karomi gūḍhârthān.

[23] One among them is the quotation from the *Tattva-Samāsa*, which is "generally accepted as later than 5th cent. A.D." – and he refers to Chintamani (1929), where no such statement can be found.

The Sāṁkhya quotation in the Bhagavad-Ajjuka

In the opening scene of this philosophical comedy, *The saintly master as a courtesan*, a new pupil, Śāṇḍilya tells his master, a wandering mendicant (*parivrājaka*) that earlier he was an ordinated Buddhist novice (*Śākya-śramaṇakam pravrajita*) in the hope of a good breakfast. When asked what he learnt there, he says that he still knows quite a lot. "Listen, master! 'Eight productive natures, sixteen modifications, soul, five winds, having the three qualities, mind, emergence and dissolution.' The Victorious Master said so in the books of the Piṭakas." The *parivrājaka* promptly corrects him: "This is Sāṁkhya doctrine, not Buddhism!"[24]

In spite of the minor textual variation[25] there cannot be the slightest doubt that Śāṇḍilya is quoting the beginning of the *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra.*[26] The quotation is in Sanskrit, but Śāṇḍilya speaks only Prakrit, so he could not have made up the items in the list; however, he could be mistaken about their order, since the items are not joined by rules of sandhi.[27] One item, mind (*manaḥ*), is very suspect, since it is superfluous, being already included in the category of modifications; and, of course, it is not present in the known text of the *Tattva-Samāsa*. I think it may be an old corruption for *-m ataḥ,* 'hence'.[28] With this emendation, he is quoting (in this order) sūtras 1, 2, 3, 9, 4, 5 of the *Tattva-Samāsa.*

---

[24] *Bhagavad-Ajjukīya* pp. 50–51:
Śāṇḍilya: Suṇādu bhaavō!
"Aṣṭau prakṛtayaḥ, ṣoḍaśa vikārāḥ, ātmā, pañca vāyavaḥ, traiguṇyaṁ, manaḥ, saṁcaraḥ, pratisaṁcaraś cê"ti.
Evvaṁ bhaavadā Jiṇēṇa Piḍaa-putthaēsu uttaṁ.
Parivrājaka: Śāṇḍilya! Sāṁkhya-samaya eṣa, na Śākya-samayaḥ!

[25] Chakravarti (1951: 169), through whose work most scholars are aware of this quotation, prints the improbable *pañcāvayavaḥ* ('having five members' = syllogism) instead of *pañca vāyavaḥ*. He refers to Anujan Achan's edition, where we find the correct *pañca vāyavaḥ*.

In fact, Chakravarti just inherited this reading from Chintamani (1929: 146); in his text, we also find *pratisañcāraś* instead of *pratisañcaraś*. (Chintamani's source is "Prābhākara Śāstrin's Edition of the Bhagavadajjuka", pp. 14–15; I could not see this book.) The latter difference is insignificant, as both forms occur in the manuscripts of the Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra (Kaviraj 1938: 31).

In Anujan Achan's edition we find *pañca vāyavaḥ* and *pratisañcaraś* without any variant readings noted. The commentary there printed *(Diṅ-mātra-Darśinī Vyākhyā)* completely supports this reading; the only difference is that it places *manas* third, before *ātmā*, while in the *Bhagavad-Ajjukīya* itself it is the sixth. Lockwood–Bhat (1991: 101. paragraph of the Sanskrit text), prepared from different manuscripts, give also this reading.

Chintamani (1929) everywhere consistently writes *pañcāvayavaḥ* and *pratisañcāra*, even when he refers to the text of the Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra "based upon two of the Adyar Library manuscripts" and "the printed text" (p. 147). Since in other respects his text matches exactly Kaviraj's (1938) "Adyar manuscript" and "Calcutta Edition" respectively, but they do not have these anomalies, it seems probable that *pañcāvayavaḥ* at least is Chintamani's error in all cases.

[26] Comparing the six commentaries available to me (Dvivedī 1969 and Sinha 1915, appendix V) and the six manuscripts reported by Kaviraj (1938), the following text seems to underlie them:

1 *aṣṭau prakṛtayaḥ* 2 *ṣoḍaśa vikārāḥ* 3 *puruṣaḥ* 4 *traiguṇyam* 5 *saṁcaraḥ pratisaṁcaraś ca* 6 *adhyātmam adhibhūtam adhidaivaṁ ca* 7 *pañcâbhibuddhayaḥ* 8 *pañca karma-yonayaḥ* 9 *pañca vāyavaḥ* 10 *pañca karmâtmānaḥ* 11 *pañca-parvā 'vidyā* 12 *aṣṭāviṁśatidhā 'śaktiḥ* 13 *navadhā tuṣṭiḥ* 14 *aṣṭadhā siddhiḥ* 15 *daśa mūlikârthāḥ* 16 *anugraha-sargaḥ* 17 *caturdaśavidho bhūta-sargaḥ* 18 *trividho bandhaḥ* 19 *trividho mokṣaḥ* 20 *trividhaṁ pramāṇam*

[27] This is visible only in one place: *vikārāḥ, ātmā* would be *vikārā ātmā* with sandhi.

[28] The *anusvāra ṁ* is but a dot in most Indian scripts that very easily comes and goes in manuscripts. An exactly similar case is *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* 1.1.7: for the correct *karmaṇām aviśeṣaḥ* in the Devanāgarī texts, we find in the Śāradā manuscripts *karmaṇāṁmaviśeṣaḥ* in $Ś_2$, further corrupted to *karmāṇāṁsaviśeṣaḥ* in $Ś_1$ and $Ś_3$ (Ruzsa 2005a: 3).

We need only an additional mistake of *t* for *n*, which is quite usual in several scripts, e.g. in many Devanāgarī versions, and in the Southern Grantha, Malayālam and Siṁhala scripts. The *Bhagavad-Ajjuka* was probably written in the South (perhaps

Beyond the interesting addition of '*hence' before sūtra 5, the only difference is in the word used for soul. In standard Sāṁkhya and in most sources for the *Tattva-Samāsa* it is *puruṣa,* while in Śāṇḍilya's quotation we find *ātman.* Kavirāj seems to report one from among six manuscripts of the *Tattva-Samāsa* where also *ātman* is found.[29] Although all the commentaries I have seen support the reading *puruṣa,* three of them quote a list of its synonyms accepted in Sāṁkhya;[30] and here *ātman* appears in an important place – in the two lists in prose it is actually the first synonym given.

The intrusion of sūtra 9 between sūtras 3 and 4 may be an error of Śāṇḍilya. For he immediately continues the demonstration of the depth of his learning with a truly Buddhist quotation: the Ten Precepts of a monk. But he quotes only five, and in this order: 2, 3, 4, 1, 6.[31] He mixes up the order, and that he drops rule five (the prohibition of drinking alcohol) may be suggestive, but even more importantly he brings forward rule 6, which is about proper eating hours. His main theme throughout the play is food. And this may give us the clue for his insertion of sūtra 9, the "five winds" into what he can recall of Sāṁkhya: these five "breaths" are responsible for all the vital functions, including digestion.

All these show that the *Tattva-Samāsa* must have been very well known then: the uneducated Śāṇḍilya can quote from it (30% of the text!); the *parivrājaka* immediately recognises it; and, even more importantly, the audience is supposed to notice the intrusion of the "five winds"-sūtra and perhaps realise its funny implication. I think that it was possible only if the *Tattva-Samāsa* was a standard school-text at the time, learned by everyone receiving higher Sanskrit education. A further sign of this is that the master uses the peculiar word *karmâtman*, 'action-self', and explains it to Śāṇḍilya as the phenomenal human being as contrasted to *ātman*, soul (pp. 28–31). Now *karmâtman* is one of the more obscure terms of the *Tattva-Samāsa,* not really understood even by its commentators; it is almost like a signature, since it is not generally used in Sanskrit.[32]

Other early references to the Tattva-Samāsa

Ten of the twenty sūtras of the *Tattva-Samāsa* contain only categories clearly present also in the SK;[33] they are therefore difficult to detect. Of the remaining ten, six can be shown to be familiar to the

---

in Kāñcīpuram), and its tradition was alive only there, especially in Kerala (i.e. Malayālam territory).

Devanāgarī त्रैगुण्यमतः → त्रैगुण्यंमनः (t/n: त/न). Grantha த/ந Malayālam ത/ന and Siṁhala ත/න

[29] His apparatus is utterly confusing for this sūtra. In his apparatus, he supplies only data that differ from his preferred reading. He gives "3. *ātmā*" as his reading, and then lists the readings of the manuscripts he coded A–E and Ad., also of printed editions BE and CE as follows: "A, C–E (*puruṣaḥ*) (3); B *puruṣaśca* (3); Ad. *puruṣaḥ* (3); *puruṣaḥ* (BE, CE, 3)". He is clearly in error about the editions, for there the numbering is 4, not 3.

[30] *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Vivecana* p. 8, *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Yāthārtya-Dīpana* p. 39*, Krama-Dīpikā* p. 78.

[31] Actually the manuscripts differ a little in this respect, some producing the correct order, but that must be an over-correction – for no copyist would *accidentally* relocate the first rule, "Do not kill!" to the fourth place. This was clearly intended by the author as a source of amusement for the audience.

[32] As a compound adjective ('whose essence is action/ritual') it is natural and freely, although infrequently, used. As a noun, it does occur in the MBh twice (12.339.15, 14.13.13) with the sense 'individual soul', as contrasted to universal soul (*paramâtman*) or Kṛṣṇa. The even rarer synonym occurring in the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā* (*Śārīra-Sthāna* 1.16, p. 286), *karma-puruṣa* meaning 'the empirical human as the subject of the medical science' reinforces our intuition that in this tradition *puruṣa* and *ātman* were freely interchangeable. – Not impossibly the compound *kārya-karaṇa* ("activity-organ"?), having the sense 'the material human organism' in the *Yukti-Dīpikā* and some other texts (Watson 2006: 194–195), belongs also to this group of archaic words.

[33] 1 *aṣṭau prakṛtayaḥ* 2 *ṣoḍaśa vikārāḥ* 3 *puruṣaḥ* 4 *traiguṇyam* 9 *pañca vāyavaḥ* 12 *aṣṭāviṁśatidhā 'śaktiḥ* 13 *navadhā tuṣṭiḥ* 14 *aṣṭadhā siddhiḥ* 17 *caturdaśavidho bhūta-sargaḥ* 20 *trividhaṁ pramāṇam*

commentators of the SK.[34] The data for each of them will be shown below without too much detail merely to prove the point that they were known.

Sūtra 6, *adhyātmam adhibhūtam adhidaivataṁ ca* underlies the interpretation of suffering in all classical SK commentaries.

Sūtra 8, *pañca karma-yonayaḥ* ("five sources of action") is less known, but the *Yukti-Dīpikā* gives a detailed analysis of the concept on pp. 209–210, agreeing completely with the understanding of the commentaries on the *Tattva-Samāsa.* It appears without any apparent justification for its presence, as an aside to the explanation of *pañca vāyavaḥ*, "five winds", occurring in SK 29. In the *Tattva-Samāsa* the sūtras on the five sources of action and on the five winds also stand together (8 and 9), so it is remarkable that the *Yukti-Dīpikā* also mentions them always together.[35]

Sūtra 11, *pañca-parvā 'vidyā* "ignorance with five parts" appears in two commentaries to SK 47. Vācaspati Miśra attributes it to Vārṣagaṇya,[36] while the *Yukti-Dīpikā* mentions it a second time under SK 64 in a form[37] that recalls the obscure Sāṁkhya passage in the *Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad* I.5.[38] Johnson (1937: 8) noticed that the expression already appears in Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddha-Carita* (ca. 100 CE) in his account of the Sāṁkhya system as explained by Arāḍa Kālāma to the young Buddha.[39]

Sūtra 15, *daśa mūlikârthāḥ* ("ten root objects", i.e. fundamental tenets) appears in all commentaries, mostly *ad* SK 72.[40] The list of the ten is everywhere identical with that given in the *Tattva-Samāsa* commentaries. The name varies a little, *mūlika, maulika, mūlikârtha* and even *cūlikârtha* ("cockscomb object") in the *Yukti-Dīpikā.*

Sūtra 18, *trividho bandhaḥ* ("three kinds of bondage") appears in all commentaries *ad* SK 44, and the interpretation is exactly what we find in the *Tattva-Samāsa* commentaries.

Sūtra 19, *trividho mokṣaḥ* ("three kinds of liberation") is puzzling. It is problematic to all commentaries of the *Tattva-Samāsa,* no wonder it is not quoted – but the *Yukti-Dīpikā* seems to refer to it with the sentence "For we want liberation from the three realms of desire, form and formlessness; or from the three [births], divine, human and animal."[41]

Of the four sūtras not appearing in the SK commentaries, no. 5 (*saṁcaraḥ pratisaṁcaraś ca,* "emergence and dissolution) and 10 (*pañca karmâtmānaḥ*, "five action-selves") are referred to in the *Bhagavad-Ajjuka,* as we have seen; they also appear in the MBh.[42] Since then of the 20 sūtras only

---

[34] The remaining four are 5 *saṁcaraḥ pratisaṁcaraś ca* 7 *pañcâbhibuddhayaḥ* 10 *pañca karmâtmānaḥ* 16 *anugraha-sargaḥ.*

[35] *Karma-yonayaḥ* are mentioned also on p. 6, 49 and 253.

[36] *Ata eva pañca-parvā 'vidyety āha Vārṣagaṇyaḥ.*

[37] *Pañca-parvaṇo 'syâvidyā-srotaso* seems to have been the original text; the edition reads *pañcasrotaso 'syāvidyāparvaṇo,* with v. l. *pañcaparvaṇe 'syāvidyāsrotaso* (p. 265).

[38] *Pañca-sroto'mbuṁ… pañcaparvām.*

[39] 12.33 and 37; the interpretation is exactly what we find in the *Tattva-Samāsa* commentaries.

[40] But in the *Jaya-Maṅgalā ad* SK 51, in the *Sāṁkhya-Vṛtti (V_2) ad* SK 21, and in the *Yukti-Dīpikā* twice in the Introducton (p. 2 and 6), first in verse, then in prose. (Gauḍapāda has no commentary for verse 72.)

[41] *Mokso hi kāma-rūpârūpya-dhātu-trayād iṣyate; daiva-mānuṣya-tiryagyoni-trayād vā.* (p. 16, *ad* SK 1).

[42] For *karmâtman,* see fn. 32 above, where the similar *karma-puruṣa* (in the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā*) is also mentioned. *Pratisaṁcara* occurs twice in 12.225, clearly in the sense of 'final dissolution of the world in Brahman', in verses 10 and 14. In the Purāṇas it is of somewhat more frequent occurrence (Brinkhaus 2007); but the *Brahmâṇḍa-Purāṇa,* which Brinkhaus considers the earliest version, in its introductory chapter immediately gives its source: *sāṁkhye lakṣaṇam uddiṣṭaṁ,* "the description is given in Sāṁkhya" (1.1.139a). Of *saṁcara* in the meaning 'creation' I have found no example.

two are not attested in the early literature;[43] and whenever the sūtras were interpreted in the early texts, the explanation always matched the analysis of the *Tattva-Samāsa* commentators, the conclusion seems unavoidable:

The *Tattva-Samāsa* is an ancient text, probably older than Aśvaghoṣa, and its original commentary (by Pañcaśikha, as Bhāvāganeśa says[44]) seems to be equally old. That commentary seems now lost, but it was known to, followed and frequently quoted by the authors of the extant commentaries.

5. The sources of the commentarial interpretation

Now we may confidently state that the source of the categories used by the commentaries to interpret the three kinds of suffering (*ādhyātmikam, ādhibhautikam, ādhidaivikaṁ*) is the *Tattva-Samāsa*'s sūtra 6 (*adhyātmam adhibhūtam adhidaivaṁ ca*).[45] The interpretation however of the terms is entirely different: in the SK commentaries, it is internal factors, living beings and inanimate forces/divine agencies; while in the *Tattva-Samāsa* commentaries, it is human capacities, their objects and their tutelary divinities.[46]

In all the SK commentaries to the first *kārikā,* we find a somewhat surprising amount of medical detail. Probably so much would be enough: "bodily suffering can be caused by various diseases", but we get several lines (9 and 10 in case of V_2 and V_1), detailing the disturbances of the three bodily humours etc. Two of the commentaries actually mention their medical sources.[47] If we consider the close connection of the medical tradition to Sāṁkhya philosophy (the *Caraka-Saṁhitā* is well known to be an important source of our knowledge of early Sāṁkhya[48]), this may point out the right direction in our search for the origin of this philosophically unnatural analysis of *duḥkha.*

And in fact, we do find such an analysis in the other early Āyurvedic treatise, the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā.* In the passage quoted, we meet with all the elements of the Sāṁkhya commentaries, but they have here their proper role. The key to the difference is that Suśruta is not analysing the unavoidability of suffering (*duḥkha*), but he is giving a comprehensive categorisation of the pathologic states

---

[43] 7 *pañcâbhibuddhayaḥ*, "five intellectual factors" and 16 *anugrahasargaḥ*, "creation of favour"

[44] In the third introductory stanza to the *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Yāthārthya-Dīpana,* p. 33:

> *Samāsa-Sūtrāṇy ālambya, Vyākhyām Pañcaśikhasya ca,*
> *Bhāvāganeśaḥ kurte Tattva-Yāthārthya-Dīpanam.*
>
> Leaning upon the *Summary Sūtras* and the *Exposition* of Pañcaśikha,
> Bhāvāganeśa makes *The illumination of the true meaning of the principles*.

[45] The *Yukti-Dīpikā* even explains the difference in grammatical form: the kinds of suffering are called so on account of the difference of *their causes* that are characterised as *adhyātma, adhibhūta* and *adhidaiva* (*nimittānām adhyātmâdhibhūtâdhidaiva-lakṣaṇānāṁ bhedād*).

[46] Excepting the *Samāsa-Sūtra-Sarvôpakāriṇī Ṭīkā* (pp. 60–61) and Narendra's commentary (Sinha 1915: Appendix V, pp. 9–10): they interpret the triad in the sūtra as the SK-commentators do. The SK-interpretation is familiar to the other commentators of the *Tattva-Samāsa* as well (excepting the *Sāṁkhya-Sūtra-Vivaraṇa*), but they add a separate sūtra (*trividhaṁ duḥkham*) to the end of the *Tattva-Samāsa* to introduce it. Bhāvāgaṇeśa (ca. 1600 CE) clearly states that this is taken from another tradition. In the introduction to this sūtra, he says: "Categories not mentioned in this book, if they do not contradict it, are to be taken up from another book". (*Atra śāstre 'nuktāḥ svâvirodhinaḥ śāstrântarīyā api padārthāḥ grāhyāḥ. Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Yāthārthya-Dīpana* p. 55.)

[47] The *Sāṁkhya-Saptati-Vṛtti* (*V_1*) says *vaidyā bruvate* ("the doctors say", p. 2), and in the *Suvarṇa-Saptati* we read "dans le livre de médecine, il est dit" ("it is said in the medical book") Takakusu (1904a: 979).

[48] See Dasgupta (1922: 213–16).

(*duḥkha*) that a physician has to face and treat properly. (Here *ādhidaivika* is better translated as ‘relating to fate’.)

And that **suffering is of three kinds: relating to oneself, relating to the creatures, relating to fate**.

But it occurs in the seven kinds of sickness. Again, those seven kinds of sickness are as follows: (1) resulting from the origins, (2) resulting from birth, (3) resulting from the faults, (4) resulting from collision, (5) resulting from time, (6) resulting from the divine, (7) resulting from one’s own nature.

(1) There ‘resulting from the origins’ are evil haemorrhoids etc. in consequence of the faults of the semen or the (mother’s) blood.

(2) ‘Resulting from birth’ are those that are born crippled, blind from birth, deaf, dumb, indistinctly speaking, dwarf etc. from the defect of the mother. These are also of two kinds: caused by the bodily fluid and caused by the defects of the pregnancy.

(3) ‘Resulting from the faults [*doṣa*, the three bodily humours]’ are those originating from diseases and arising from wrong diet and treatment. These are also of two kinds: starting from the abode of raw food [= the upper part of the alimentary canal] and starting from the abode of digested food [= the abdomen or the intestines].

And again **of two kinds: bodily and mental. – These here are the ones ‘relating to oneself’.**

(4) ‘Resulting from collision’ are accidental, resulting from the fighting of the weak with the powerful. These are also of two kinds: caused by weapons and caused by beasts. **These are the ones ‘relating to the creatures’.**

(5) ‘Resulting from time [= season, i.e. weather]’ are those of which the cause is cold, heat, wind, rain etc. These are also of two kinds: caused by an abnormal season and caused by an orderly season.

(6) ‘Resulting from the divine’ are those caused by curse because of the malice of the gods, caused by spells and caused by superinduction [or possession?]. These are also of two kinds: caused by lightning or thunderbolt and caused by devils etc. And again of two kinds: produced by contact and unexpected.

(7) Hunger, thirst, old age, death, sleep etc. are ‘resulting from one’s own nature’. These are also of two kinds: timely and untimely. Here ‘timely’ is caused by precaution [or avoidance or protection]; ‘untimely’ is caused by neglect. **These are ‘relating to fate’**.[49]

---

[49] *Sūtra-Sthāna* 24.4–7 (pp. 95–96):

Tac ca ***duḥkhaṁ trividham: ādhyātmikam, ādhibhautikam, ādhidaivikam iti.***

Tat tu saptavidhe vyādhāv upanipatati. Te punaḥ saptavidhā vyādhayaḥ tad yathā: (1) ādi-bala-pravr̥ttāḥ, (2) janma-bala-pravr̥ttāḥ, (3) doṣa-bala-pravr̥ttāḥ, (4) saṁghāta-bala-pravr̥ttāḥ, (5) kāla-bala-pravr̥ttāḥ, (6) d~~e~~[ai]va-bala-pravr̥ttāḥ, (7) svabhāva-bala-pravr̥ttā iti. ||4||

(1) Tatra, ādi-bala-pravr̥ttā ye śukra-śoṇita-doṣânvayāḥ kaṣṭârśaḥ-prabhr̥tayaḥ. Te 'pi dvividhāḥ: mātr̥-jāḥ, pitr̥-jāś ca.

(2) Janma-bala-pravr̥ttā ye mātur apacārāt paṅgu-jāty~~ab-~~andha-badhira-mūka-minmina-vāmana-prabhr̥tayo jāyante. Te 'pi dvividhāḥ: rasa-kr̥tāḥ, dauhr̥dâpacāra-kr̥tāś ca.

(3) Doṣa-bala-pravr̥ttā ye ātaṅka-samutpannā, mithyâhārâcāra-kr̥tāś ca. Te 'pi dvividhāḥ: āmâśaya-samutthāḥ, pakvâśaya-samutthāś ca.

Punaś ca ***dvividhāḥ: śārīrā, mānasāś ca. Te ete ādhyātmikāḥ.*** ||5||

(4) Saṁghāta-bala-pravr̥ttā ya āgantavo durbalasya balavad-vigrahāt. Te 'pi dvividhāḥ: śastra-kr̥tāḥ, vyāla-kr̥tāś ca. ***Ete ādhi-bhautikāḥ.*** ||6||

(5) Kāla-bala-pravr̥ttā ye śītôṣṇa-vāta-var̥ṣâtapa-prabhr̥ti-nimittāḥ. Te 'pi dvividhāḥ: vyāpanna-rtu-kr̥tāḥ, a-vyāpanna-rtu-kr̥tāś ca.

(6) Daiva-bala-pravr̥ttā ye deva-drohād abhiśaptakā, atharvaṇa-kr̥tā, upasarga-jāś ca. Te 'pi dvividhāḥ: vidyud-aśani-kr̥tāḥ, piśācâdi-kr̥tāś ca. Punaś ca dvi-vidhāḥ: saṁsarga-jāḥ, ākasmikāś ca.

(7) Svabhāva-bala-pravr̥ttā ye kṣut-pipāsā-jarā-mr̥tyu-nidrā-prabhr̥tayaḥ. Te 'pi dvividhāḥ: kāla-jāḥ, a-kāla-jāś ca. Tatra parirakṣaṇa-kr̥tāḥ kālajāḥ, a-parirakṣaṇa-kr̥tā a-kāla-jāḥ. ***Ete ādhidaivikāḥ.***

Here the three main types of *duḥkha* are individual diseases, wounds, and naturally occurring states. The whole system seems quite logical (if somewhat antiquated) from a medical point of view.[50] In this approach, it is perfectly in order to mention humans as just one kind of beings, for wounds are properly analysed as being caused by weapons and by animal bites. The selection of the terminology (*ādhyātmikam, ādhibhautikam, ādhidaivikam*) must have been inspired by more philosophical (or religious) antecedents, possibly by the *Tattva-Samāsa*, but the interpretation is particularly adapted to the needs of medical science.

The *Sūtra-Sthāna* (where the quoted passage occurs) in the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā* seems free from Sāṁkhya influence, so the direction of influence is clear – the SK commentaries borrowed from Suśruta. Chronological considerations also favour this view since the core of the text is older than the 3rd century BCE and even its latest revision is earlier than 500 CE; the Bower manuscript (early 5th century) mentions the book (Wujastyk 1998: 104–105).

The third part of this medical treatise, *Śārīra-Sthāna*, may be later, since it explicitly refers back to the *Sūtra-Sthāna*.[51] Its first chapter contains a fairly detailed account of the principles of Sāṁkhya (1.3–10, 22; pp.281–284, 287); then Suśruta emphasizes some important points where *āyur-veda* differs from it. The Sāṁkhya version discussed is fairly close to the SK's, but clearly not identical to it – probably it is earlier. The most apparent difference is that in verse 7 Suśruta describes the *adhyātma–adhibhūta–adhidaiva* triad now familiar from the *Tattva-Samāsa*, exactly as it appears in the commentaries to that text (i.e. organ–its object–its deity). Perhaps this was written before the SK, and possibly the tradition described was that of the *Tattva-Samāsa.*

So it seems that the first SK commentator took his interpretation of the threefold suffering from the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā.* Probably Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's original meaning was unknown to him, and he found here a text that explicitly gave the three kinds of *duḥkha.* For us it may appear strange that he imported from a medical book, but we saw that *āyur-veda* and Sāṁkhya[52] were on really friendly terms. In general, in antiquity philosophy and medicine were close allies, both in Greece and in India. It is well known for instance that the Buddha's standard formulation of his most basic teaching, the Four Noble Truths follows a medical model: diagnosis–anamnesis–prognosis–cure.[53] In any case, the borrowing was made easy by the triad being familiar from a good old authentic Sāṁkhya text, probably the *Tattva-Samāsa.*

But if the explanation of the commentators is based on a different, non-philosophical tradition, what may have been the original significance of the triple suffering?

---

[50] It also accords well with other accounts in the tradition. E.g. at the very beginning of the *Suśruta-Saṁhitā* (*Sūtra-Sthāna* 1.23–25; p. 6) a similar, but simpler system is shown without grouping the illnesses into the triad of suffering. *Tad-duḥkha-saṁyogā vyādhaya ucyante. Te caturvidhāḥ: āgantavaḥ, śārīrāḥ, mānasāḥ, svābhāvikāś cêti.* etc. "Its [the *puruṣa*'s] contacts with pain (*duḥkha*) are called illnesses. They are of four types: accidental, bodily, mental and belonging to one's own nature." Here 'accidental' corresponds to *ādhibhautika*, 'bodily and mental' to *ādhyātmika,* and 'belonging to one's own nature' to *ādhidaivika.* – The *Caraka-Saṁhitā* also has a threefold categorisation of diseases (*roga*): *nija, āgantu* and *mānasa*, i.e. innate, accidental, and mental. (*Sūtra-Sthāna* 11.5)

[51] In the first chapter we are dealing with, twice: in verse 14 to 1.38, and in verse 16 to 1.22.

[52] And other philosophical traditions as well. Vaiśeṣika categories appear frequently in the medical texts; and the epistemological discussions in the *Caraka-Saṁhitā* are unmistakably related to, although clearly different from the old Nyāya system as it is known to us (Preisendanz 2009).

[53] As Hacker pointed out (Halbfass 1995: 106, 119–120), the same is stated about Yoga by Vyāsa: "As the science of medicine has four divisions: disease, its cause, health, cure, so this science also has four divisions, i.e. worldly existence, its cause, liberation, the means to it." *Yathā cikitsā-śāstraṁ catur-vyūham: rogo, roga-hetur, ārogyaṁ, bhaiṣajyam iti – evam idam api śāstram catur-vyūham eva, tad yathā: saṁsāraḥ, saṁsāra-hetur, mokṣo, mokṣôpāya evêti*. (*Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* 2.15)

6. Universal suffering

Suffering is the point of departure for Buddhism also: *dukkhaṁ ariya-saccaṁ*, the noble truth of suffering is the first of the Four Noble Truths. There is no fixed list of sufferings here, but most typically, we meet four: birth, old age, illness and death. However, we can notice that they fall into two separate categories: old age, illness and death are evidently suffering – they are the very experiences that sent young Gotama on the road. Birth is suffering mainly in a metaphorical sense as it opens the way for actual suffering. Its being so is a result of the insight, not a motive for seeking it.

It is clearly shown also in the *paticca samuppāda*, the chain of dependent origination, where *jāti*, birth is the eleventh member, leading up to suffering as the twelfth and final one. Therefore, we can reasonably suppose that there was a more or less natural and popular concept of the three sufferings old age, illness and death.[54] How much this idea is peculiarly Buddhist is difficult to say; but it is not exclusively so. We read in the *Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad*:

> There is no illness, no old age, no death
> for him who won the body made of the fire of Yoga.[55]

We may remember that the *Śvetāśvatara* is a yogic Upaniṣad and has therefore close relation to contemporary Sāṁkhya thinking. Also in the *Mokṣa-Dharma,* so full of archaic Sāṁkhya theories, we find the triad together:

> When death, old age, disease and suffering from many causes
> are inseparable from the body, how can you stay cool?[56]

The examples could be multiplied; perhaps the similar passage in the *Manu-Smṛti* (12.80) should be mentioned, for this text is also an important witness for early Sāṁkhya.

There is also a definite link connecting the Buddhist and Sāṁkhya conceptions of *duḥkha*,[57] and it is provided by Aśvaghoṣa. In the *Buddha-Carita*, Canto 12 the Bodhisattva approaches the Sāṁkhya teacher Arāḍa Kālāma for instruction. On the words of the sage,

> Stepping on the raft of knowledge, cross the flood of suffering!

Gotama responds excitedly with the question:

> Therefore, if you think that it can be told, please tell me
> how I can be freed from old age, death and sickness.[58]

In his less than clear response, Arāḍa also uses similar categories:

> Both nature and the modification, also birth, death and old age:
> so much only is reality, so they say; understand that, O stable-minded one!

---

[54] For some more detail, see Chapter VI.6 (and the whole of Chapter VI for a general picture of the classification of suffering in Buddhism).

[55] *Na tasya rogo, na jarā, na mṛtyuḥ*
prāptasya yogâgnimayaṁ śarīram. (2.12.)

[56] *Mṛtyur, jarā ca, vyādhiś ca, duḥkhaṁ câneka-kāraṇam*
anuṣaktaṁ yadā dehe – kiṁ svastha iva tiṣṭhasi? (MBh XII.169.21)

[57] The two traditions are very close in many respects. Both are insubstantialists (as far as everyday objects are concerned), and they analyse cognition as a material process. Both focus on change and causation. Both seek liberation (depicted in negative terms) in a way combining understanding and meditation.

[58] Significantly, in another place (IV.86ab) he explicitly calls these a triad: “Aging, disease and death – if this triad did not exist…” *Jarā, vyādhiś ca, mṛtyuś ca – yadi na syād idaṁ trayam…*

What is born and also grows old, agonises and dies
that is the manifest, so it is to be recognised; the unmanifest from its opposite.[59]

We have to add to all this that in the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* itself we read:

There the conscious *puruṣa* attains *the suffering caused by old age and death*.
Until the cessation of the subtle body, therefore, suffering is of one's own nature.[60]

There can remain little doubt that Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa intended the *duḥkha-traya* to refer to the sufferings of old age, death and – in all probability – illness as third. And indeed, we have some evidence that he inherited this concept from his masters, specifically from Devala.

Lallanji Gopal collected the relevant material[61] for Devala. He is mentioned in the *Māṭhara-Vr̥tti ad* SK 71: "From Kapila, Āsuri received this knowledge, then Pañcaśikha, from him it got to Bhārgava, Ulūka, Vālmīki, Hārita, Devala and others. Then from them Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa received it."[62] That Devala is mentioned last may suggest that he was not far removed from Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa (although Gopal would put him in the remote ages before the Buddha). Devala wrote a law-book, a *Dharma-Sūtra* that is now lost, but lengthy quotations survive; and they clearly show that he was a follower of Sāṁkhya, specifically of a version quite close to that of Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa.

Now Devala clearly held the view that the three kinds of suffering are birth, old age and death. For in a detailed summary of the Sāṁkhya principles, he says that "There are three kinds of suffering";[63] while on the state of the liberated person, he quotes the somewhat unusual Sāṁkhya position as follows:

---

59 *Jñāna-plavam adhiṣṭhāya, śīghraṁ duḥkhârṇavaṁ tara!* (9cd)

Tasmād arhasi tad vaktuṁ, vaktavyaṁ yadi manyase:
jarā-maraṇa-rogebhyo yathâyam parimucyate. (14)

Prakr̥tiś ca, vikāraś ca, janma, mr̥tyur, jarâiva ca:
tat tāvat sattvam, ity uktaṁ. Sthira-sattva, parehi tat! (17)

Jāyate, jīryate câiva, bādhyate, mriyate ca yat:
tad 'vyaktam' iti vijñeyam. Avyaktaṁ tu viparyayāt. (22)

60 *Tatra jarā-maraṇa-kr̥taṁ duḥkham prāpnoti cetanaḥ puruṣaḥ.*
Liṅgasyâ vinivr̥ttes tasmād duḥkhaṁ sva-bhāvena. (55)

This sounds like a paraphrase of the (clearly Sāṁkhya-influenced) *Mokṣa-Dharma* passage (MBh XII.316.26):

Tatra mr̥tyu-jarā-duḥkhaiḥ satataṁ samabhidrutaḥ
saṁsāre pacyate jantus. Tat kathaṁ nâvabudhyase?

There, constantly attacked by the suffering of death and old age,
the living being burns in *saṁsāra* [the eternal round of reincarnation]. How can you not see it?

Which has a variant in MBh III.200.33:

Jāti-mr̥tyu-jarā-duḥkhaiḥ satataṁ samabhidrutaḥ
saṁsāre pacyamānaś ca doṣair ātma-kr̥tair naraḥ

Man is constantly attacked by the suffering of birth, death and old age,
and burns in *saṁsāra* because of his own errors.

61 Gopal (2000: passim, but the most relevant discussion is on pp. 235–255).

62 *Kapilād Āsuriṇā prāptam idaṁ jñānam, tataḥ Pañcaśikhena, tasmād BhārgavÔlūka-Vālmīki-Hārita-Devala-prabhr̥tīn āgatam. Tatas tebhya Īśvarakr̥ṣṇena prāptam.* – Devala is omitted from the otherwise identical text of the (perhaps earlier) *Sāṁkhya-Saptati-Vr̥tti* *(V_1)*.

63 *Trividham duḥkham.* Aparārka's commentary on the *Yājñavalkya-Smr̥ti,* Prāyaścitta (ch. 3) 109, quoted in Gopal (2000: 236).

> And so he has departed, with no qualities; his bondage broken, liberated from *the suffering of birth, old age and death;* like someone asleep, intoxicated or smoking poison, his intellect gone; only the subtle elements remaining, he finds the highest, absolute joy – this is the Sāṁkhya teaching.[64]

This interpretation of the *duḥkha-traya* in SK 1 fits well into the requirements previously suggested. These sufferings are known to all and at the same time, they have that existential importance that qualifies them to be the source of a meaningful philosophical investigation. The limited nature of our existence has been the point of departure for many philosophies worldwide; it was so for the Buddha, and – as we see – for Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa as well.[65] The triad is capable of a more abstract analysis, but this topic will not be pursued here as it has been fully treated of in Chapter VI (especially in section 2, on the *Yoga-Sūtra*).

After all what has been said so far, it may come as a real surprise that the SK commentators in fact do remember the original, simple and natural meaning of the threefold suffering. Immediately after *kārikā* 1, introducing the Vedic position to be rejected in the next verse they say that the orthodox believe that their sacrifices can free them from all suffering: "What can diseases, death or old age do to him who drinks the soma?"[66] Only two commentaries give the full triad, but all refer at least to (the overcoming of) death.[67] So the old understanding lingered on, just they failed to connect it formally to *duḥkha-traya.*

The Buddhist understanding of suffering surfaces even within the commentaries on *duḥkha-traya*, the triad of suffering in SK 1. We saw in Gauḍapāda (and the *Māṭhara-Vr̥tti* concurs) that mental suffering is "separation from the pleasant and union with the unpleasant, etc." In three commentaries, one more item is added: "It is of three kinds: separation from the pleasant, union with the unpleasant and not getting what is desired."[68] And this is an almost *verbatim* quotation from the Benares Sermon of the Buddha, where he says in the first noble truth characterising suffering (just after illness, old age and death): "union with the unpleasant is painful (*dukkha*), separation from the pleasant is painful, whatever desire one does not get, that is also painful."[69]

7. How to fight death

If we accept this interpretation of the triple suffering, we will have to reconsider the second question: what is that "visible" method that can counteract the triple suffering of old age, illness and death – at least according to the opponent. The suggestion of the commentaries, that some worldly means like medicine is to be understood here, is not really convincing. As we read in the story of Kisā Gotamī, "Where have you ever seen medicine for the dead? … She must have gone mad through her grief over

---

[64] *Sa tathā nivr̥tto nirguṇaś chinna-bandho janma-jarā-maraṇa-duḥkha-vinirmuktaḥ suptavat mattavat viṣa-dhūma-pānavat sattvâdi-hīnaḥ tanmātrâvasthitaḥ parama-sukham aikāntikam adhigacchatîti Sāṁkhyam*. Lakṣmīdhara's *Kr̥tya-Kalpataru*, Mokṣa-kāṇḍa p. 7, quoted in Gopal (2000: 243).

[65] Also, quite naturally, for Naciketas discussing with Death in the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* (I.1.12 and 28).

[66] *Yaḥ somaṁ pibati, tasya vyādhayo, mr̥tyur, jarā vā kiṁ kariṣyati?* (*Sāṁkhya-Vr̥tti (V_2)*, p. 5.)

[67] Besides the *Sāṁkhya-Vr̥tti (V_2)*, the *Jaya-Maṅgalā* gives all the three; Gauḍapāda and Māṭhara have old age and death.

[68] *Tat trividham: priya-viprayogaḥ, apriya-saṁyoga, īpsitasya câlābhaḥ*. (*Sāṁkhya-Vr̥tti (V_2)*, p. 2.) The other two commentaries listing all the three are the *Sāṁkhya-Saptati-Vr̥tti (V_1)* and the *Suvarṇa-Saptati* (Takakusu 1904a).

[69] *…appiyehi sampayogo dukkho, piyehi vippayogo dukkho, yam p'icchaṁ na labhati, tam pi dukkhaṁ.* (*Saṁyutta-Nikāya,* V. Mahā-vagga (12. (=56.) Sacca-saṁyutta, 2. Dhamma-Cakka-Ppavattana-vagga, 1. (=11.) *Dhamma-Cakka-Ppavattana-Sutta*) 1081.)

her son."[70] No opponent worthy of the name would suggest that some technical solution is possible to *these* kinds of misery. (This was no problem for the SK commentators since their interpretation of *duḥkha* did not include death.)

Now *dṛṣṭa*, 'seen' (besides its normal use as the past participle of the verb √*dṛś* in verses 61 and 66) is consistently applied as the technical term for perception in verses 4, 5, 6, 30 and 43. Therefore, the contrast here implied would be between *jñāna* and *pratyakṣa*, theoretical knowledge and direct perception. And the way of direct experience toward liberation from suffering is, of course, meditation or Yoga.

Admittedly, this suggestion seems somewhat bold, but it is not unfounded. Indirectly referring to the competing systems is common practice in the philosophical Sūtras; naming them is the exception, not the rule. Even this technique of identifying the system by its typical source of knowledge is not unknown; in the *Brahma-Sūtra,* the Sāṁkhya theory of the world is normally referred to as 'those using inference', *ānumāna* or *ānumānika* (I.1.18, I.3.3, I.4.1, and II.2.1). If we had any doubts that Īśvarakṛṣṇa would also use this technique, in the very next *kārikā* the traditional-Vedic approach will be labelled *ānuśravika*, 'following the scripture'; and *śruti*, scripture is just another *pramāṇa*, source of valid knowledge.

What is even more, we find in the *Mokṣa-Dharma* Sāṁkhya and Yoga contrasted by the very fact that Yoga is the method of seeing:

> What the adherents of Yoga see, the same is sought by the adherents of Sāṁkhya.

The following *śloka* is as close a parallel to our text as one could possibly desire for:

> The followers of Yoga have experience as their means (*hetu*);
> the followers of Sāṁkhya decide by their science.[71]

Considering what has been said about the equivalence of *dṛṣṭa* and *pratyakṣa*, it seems probable that *pratyakṣa-hetu* here is the same as *dṛṣṭa hetu* in the SK, and so the latter may also refer to the partisans of Yoga. Or somewhat more generally, to any meditational practice that tries to reach salvation merely through *samādhi*, without proper philosophical grounding and the insights that may produce. This would include even Buddhism, since it is generally very sceptical of philosophy and further since it denies the existence of an immaterial soul and therefore incapable of differentiating (and so separating) it from *prakṛti.*[72]

That Yoga is effective against old age and disease is believed by those who practice it even today; but its tradition claims that it can overcome death as well. We have seen it in the *Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad* (above, at fn. 55), and it is repeatedly stated in the classics of the Haṭha-Yoga tradition. E.g. of the *khecarī mudrā* (blocking the airflow in the throat with the tip of the tongue), it is said in the *Haṭha-Yoga-Pradīpikā* and the *Gheraṇḍa-Saṁhitā:*

> If he remains even for half a minute with his tongue turned upwards,
> the yogin is saved from the poisons of illness, death and aging.

---

[70] *Kattha te matakassa bhesajjaṁ diṭṭha-pubba[ṁ]?… Ayaṁ putta-sokena citta-vikkhepaṁ pattā bhavissati. – Aṅguttara-Nikāya-Aṭṭhakathā*, Ekaka-nipāta (14. Etad-agga-vaggo) 246: *Kisā-Gotamī-Therī-Vatthu.*

[71] *Yad eva yogāḥ paśyanti, sāṁkhyais tad anugamyate.* (MBh 293.30ab)
Pratyakṣa-hetavo yogāḥ, sāṁkhyāḥ śāstra-viniścayāḥ. (MBh 289.7ab)

[72] That Buddhism and Yoga appear here under a common label should not strike us as unusual; it is only later preoccupation with religious differences that obscure the obvious closeness of the two traditions both in general approach and in minute detail including terminology. Tandon (1995) collected a wealth of relevant material.

And no swoon, hunger, thirst, not even laziness appears,
and no disease, aging, death: he will have a divine body.[73]

8. Temporary salvation

Why does Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa reject the way of the Yoga? Because their method will not lead to "absolute and final" relief from suffering. This seems to imply that he accepted yogic meditation as a powerful means; but it is not enough in itself, without right knowledge. Perhaps the idea is that *samādhi*, yogic trance, is similar to final emancipation in that the *puruṣa* does not receive impulses from the body, from Nature; but it is only a temporary state.[74] It is temporary *because* it is not absolute; the connection of the soul to matter is not severed, only rendered temporarily ineffective.

The word here translated as absolute, *ekânta*, means also 'solitary': which is the fundamental meaning of *kaivalya*, 'isolation', the Sāṁkhya term for final release. The pun on this double meaning is further emphasized by the fact that what was probably originally the very last line of the SK says:

he wins isolation that is both absolute and final.[75]

So the probable motive for Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's rejection of this way may be that pure *nirodha-yoga*, Yoga by suppression of the mind without metaphysical knowledge is not enough: the suppressed *prakr̥ti* is temporarily invisible, but it remains there, connected to the *puruṣa*. Real solution is possible only through the complete isolation of *puruṣa* and *prakr̥ti*, and that comes from their discrimination, from proper knowledge only.

In conclusion, we may notice the beautiful symmetry of Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's construction. The three most fundamental abilities, seeing, hearing and thinking (or knowing) are used as metaphors for the three sources of valid knowledge: perception, holy tradition and inference; and these, on the other hand, suggest the most important types of transcendental effort: the ascetic (Yoga), the religious (Veda) and the philosophical (Sāṁkhya).

---

73 *Rasanām ūrdhva-gāṁ kr̥tvā kṣaṇârdham api tiṣṭhati:*
viṣair vimucyate yogī vyādhi-mr̥tyu-jarâdibhiḥ. (*Haṭha-Yoga-Pradīpikā* 3.38)

Na ca mūrcchā, kṣudhā, tr̥ṣṇā, nâivâlasyaṁ jāyate,
na ca rogo, jarā, mr̥tyur – deva-dehaḥ sa jāyate. (*Gheraṇḍa-Saṁhitā* 3.28)

74 A strikingly similar criticism of Yoga is presented in an extremely influential late 14th century Advaita Vedānta work that shows many traces of Sāṁkhya influence, Vidyāraṇya's *Pañcadaśī* (4.38–39):

– If bondage is but mental duality, it will disappear through suppressing that (i.e. mind).
Therefore one should practice Yoga; what is the use of the knowledge of Brahman, tell me!

– Even if duality disappears for that time (i.e. during meditation), the destruction of future births
is impossible without the knowledge of Brahman – this is the drum-beat of Vedānta.

Bandhaś cet mānasaṁ dvaitaṁ, tan-nirodhena śāmyati.
Abhyased yogam evâto! Brahma-jñānena kiṁ? Vada!

Tat-kālika-dvaita-śāntāv apy, āgāmi-jani-kṣayaḥ
Brahma-jñānaṁ vinā na syād. Iti Vedānta-ḍiṇḍimaḥ.

75 *…aikântikam ātyantikam ubhayaṁ kaivalyam āpnoti.* (SK 68)

X. Inference, reasoning and causality in the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā*

1. The importance of inference in Sāṁkhya

The classical exposition of the Sāṁkhya philosophy, the *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* (SK), contains only scanty references to matters of logic. Now this is very strange in a philosophy that defines itself as the way of inference. And although it is not widely recognised, there can be little doubt about this self-identification.

In the first two verses[1] Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa states the aim of philosophising (*jijñāsā*): getting rid of suffering,[2] and says that there are three possible ways to approach it. They are: *dr̥ṣṭa hetu*, the method of perception or experience; *ānuśravika hetu*, the method following the revelation; and *tad-viparīta hetu*, the method contrary to both. The second is clearly the traditional Vedic ritualism that tries to secure long life and thereafter heaven through sacrifices. The first is normally taken to refer to everyday practical methods like finding enjoyments, healthy food or medicine; perhaps it denotes rather the way of immediate metaphysical experience, i.e. meditation, Buddhistic or Yogic *dhyāna*, when practised without correct philosophical basis.[3] The third way, Sāṁkhya, is better than the other two, because it cognises the manifest and unmanifest *prakr̥ti,* and their knower, the *puruṣa*. So the three approaches are connected to the three most fundamental cognitive faculties of man, seeing (√*dr̥ś*), hearing (√*śru*) and understanding (*vi*-√*jñā*).

---

[1] 1. *Duḥkha-trayâbhighātāj jijñāsā tad-apaghātake hetau.*
Dr̥ṣṭe sâpârthā cen – Nâikāntâtyantato 'bhāvāt.

2. *Dr̥ṣṭavad ānuśravikaḥ: sa hy aviśuddhi-kṣayâtiśaya-yuktaḥ.*
Tad-viparītaḥ śreyān, vyaktâvyakta-jña-vijñānāt.

A rough translation:

1. From the blows of the triad of suffering [arises] the inquiry into the means of repelling it.
"It being seen, that is useless" – if [you say so, I say] "No", because that is not absolute and final.

2. The [method] following the *śruti* is like the "seen", for it is connected to impurity and excess of destruction.
Their opposite is better, cognising the manifest, the unmanifest and their knower.

[2] I have tried to show elsewhere (Ruzsa 1997: 26–35, Ruzsa 1997a and Chapter IX) that contrary to the opinion of all commentaries the triple suffering includes ageing and death (the third would be birth, or – more probably – disease), and therefore Sāṁkhya starts from the eternal problem of limited human existence – as does Plato, Kant or Heidegger.

[3] I also argued for this interpretation in Ruzsa 1997: 35–38 and Chapter IX.

Now it is exactly these three faculties that are used in naming the three sources of cognition (*pramāṇa*s).[4] Direct sense perception is referred to with the very same word, *dr̥ṣṭa*, 'seen'; and in the definition of verbal testimony (*āpta-vacana*), we find the word *śruti*, 'hearing', i.e. revelation.[5] The regular term for inference, *anumāna* is derived from *anu-√mā*, 'to determine[6] after', and though the expression is not the same, the idea is similar to that of *vijñāna*. Therefore, it seems plausible to think that Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa thought of Sāṁkhya as the method of inference or reasoning, contrasted to the methods of [mystical?] experience and traditional religion.

It is not only the terminology, and not only the analogous structure of the three triads (the three eminent cognitive faculties, the three valid sources of cognition and the three ways to fight suffering) that show the central function of inference in Sāṁkhya. All the peculiar Sāṁkhya tenets are explicitly based on one type of inference, *sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭa*.[7] This is because Sāṁkhya as a philosophy is fundamentally metaphysical; it does not try to re-interpret the world as we find it in everyday experience, but rather expands it with imperceptible but somehow fundamental entities. What is imperceptible – unknowable through the senses, *dr̥ṣṭa* – could still be known either by reasoning or from tradition; according to Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa inference has priority. Tradition is accepted as a *pramāṇa* only when inference is silent (*anumānāt ... api ... a-siddham*, SK6), and the commentaries make it abundantly clear that only philosophically irrelevant details are meant – such as names of gods, or particular legendary places (Uttara-Kuru etc.). In fact the SK is free from references to any authority except reason. In several cases where it is impossible (or irrelevant) to decide, it reserves judgement (e.g. on God) or allows alternative approaches (e.g. on the unity of the material psyche: it can be seen as the one internal organ, *antaḥ-karaṇa*, or as the triad of intellect, ego-creator and mind – *buddhi, ahaṁ-kāra, manas*).[8] This kind of tolerance is atypical (though not strictly impossible) in a system that accords any importance to hallowed tradition. And also atypical, though not unparalleled in the history of Indian thought.

---

[4] 4. *Dr̥ṣṭam, anumānam, āpta-vacanaṁ ca sarva-pramāṇa-siddhatvāt*
tri-vidhaṁ pramāṇam iṣṭaṁ. Prameya-siddhiḥ pramāṇād dhi.

4. Perception, inference and reliable speech, proving all sources of cognition,
are the three accepted kinds of sources of cognition. For a source of cognition proves its object.

[5] 5. *Prati-viṣayâdhyavasāyo dr̥ṣṭaṁ. Tri-vidham anumānam ākhyātam;*
tal liṅga-liṅgi-pūrvakam. Āpta-śrutir āpta-vacanaṁ tu.

5. Perception is determination according to sense-objects. Inference is told to be of three kinds;
it includes the sign and the signified. And reliable speech is reliable *śruti* (revelation).

[6] The root √*mā* is normally translated as 'to measure' = "to determine the size of", but when occurring with *upasarga*s (verbal prefixes), the meaning element 'size' is clearly not present: e.g. *upa*-√*mā*, 'to compare', *anu*-√*mā*, 'to infer', *pra*-√*mā*, 'get to know', *nir*-√*mā*, 'to construct'.

[7] 6. *Sāmānyatas tu dr̥ṣṭād atîndriyāṇām pratītir* [*v.l. prasiddhir*] *anumānāt.*
Tasmād api câsiddham paro'kṣam āptâgamāt siddham [*v.l. sādhyam*].

6. Imperceptible [objects] are ascertained through the inference "seen through the generality";
and the invisible [objects] not proven even through it, will be proved through valid tradition.

[8] In its present form SK has authorities – the *parama-rṣi* [*Kapila*], *Āsuri* etc. (SK 69–72) –, and contains many theses unsubstantiated in any other way – notably in the *pratyaya-sarga* part (SK 46–52). However, these are arguably later additions, though mostly earlier than the known commentaries (Ruzsa 1997: 163–186).

2. The structural role of inference

Inference in the SK is not an accidental methodological (*naiyāya*) appendix to the system. Inference works only because it reproduces actual, fundamental relations in the real world. It is the mental counterpart of the physical connections expressed in the theory of *sat-kārya-vāda*.[9]

The *sat-kārya* theory is normally interpreted as saying that the effect exists in the cause already before the causal process. This is a not very plausible theory (indeed it is difficult to make some sense of it) but luckily there is nothing in the SK to support it. The verse defining the meaning of *sat-kārya*[10] says *a-sad-a-karaṇād ... sat-kāryam*: "because the non-existent does not create, [therefore only the existent creates, so the effect is] the effect of existent." The usual interpretation takes the compound *sat-kārya* as adjectival (*nīlôtpala* or *karma-dhāraya*): *[kāraṇe] sat kāryam*, the effect is existent [in the cause], while I suggest to understand it as dependent determinative (*tat-puruṣa*): *satāṁ kāryam*, the effect of existents.

On this interpretation, *sat-kārya-vāda* will not be a very peculiar theory – it turns out to be a moderate form of determinism. Determinism, because the effect has nothing in it that was not derived from its causes; and moderate, because it does not insist on one set of causes having necessarily only one particular effect; it is not excluded that there are alternatives.

This is very attractive as philosophy of nature, but to our present purpose, the important feature is the stability, and therefore knowability, of relations as a consequence of this determinism. For philosophical purposes, the most important relation is the similarity that obtains between the qualities of the effect and the cause. Already the quoted verse (SK 9) suggests this: *kāraṇa-bhāvāt,* "because its essence is that of the cause", i.e. the effect's characteristics are similar to that of the cause. Later (SK 14) it is referred to again in a more explicit form: *kāraṇa-guṇâtmakatvāt kāryasya,* "because the effect has essentially the qualities of the cause".[11]

The paradigmatic case of causation in India is the formation of something out of some stuff, e.g. a pot from clay. Cause and material cause (*kāraṇa* and *upādāna*) are almost synonyms; and this is very different from our conception, where we think of causation as obtaining between events. Although Īśvarakṛṣṇa does mention the effective cause, *śaktasya śakya-karaṇāt* (because the able creates according to ability, SK 9), it does not have any role in his system, and indeed the commentators mostly explain away the line as referring to the potentialities of the raw material.

This concept of causality determines the approach to inference as well. In Europe, the causal relation of events is reflected in the inferential relation of propositions: a proposition is the description of an event or a situation. In the Sāṁkhya conception the causal relation of two things finds its expression in the inference from one thing to another, or – and even more importantly – from the properties of one thing to the properties of another. This dyadic structure is still recognisable in the

---

[9] In my tentative reconstruction of the 'original' SK, verse 9 (on *sat-kārya*) follows immediately upon verse 6 (on inference as the means to know the imperceptible): Ruzsa (1997: 165–166, 184–186, 244); see also Chapter VII.1.

[10] 9. *A-sad-a-karaṇād, upādāna-grahaṇāt, sarva-sambhavâbhāvāt,*
śaktasya śakya-karaṇāt, kāraṇa-bhāvāc ca: sat-kāryam.

9. Because the non-existent does not create; because we take the [proper] material; because not everything comes to be; because the able creates according to ability; and because its essence is its cause: it is an effect of a real.

I think this verse is not, or at least not only, an effort at proving *sat-kārya*: rather an explication or analysis of the concept that needs no proof, as it is easily observable.

[11] More literally, "because the essence of the effect is the qualities of the cause"; as in Sāṁkhya there is no separate substance or essence apart from the system of the qualities, *guṇa*s, this comes to mean much the same thing.

standard five-membered syllogism,[12] but finds its adequate expression in the SK's form with two members.

Perhaps it is not quite pointless to emphasise that the above characterisation is not rigid. The Indian conception of causality and inference can handle events; the standard trick is to nominalise the description of the event (usually with the suffix *-tvaṁ*) and then it sounds like a thing. So one of the favourite Sāṁkhya (also Nyāya, of course) examples of *śeṣavat*-type inference is when from the flood we infer (previous) rain.

3. Definitions of inference and some examples

The very little that is explicitly said on inference is this: *tri-vidham anumānam ākhyātam, tal liṅga-liṅgi-pūrvakam ... sāmānyatas tu dṛṣṭād atîndriyāṇām pratītir anumānāt* ("Inference is told to be of three kinds; it includes the sign and the signified … Imperceptible [objects] are ascertained through the inference seen through higher genus". SK 5–6)

The three kinds of inference are not named, but all the commentaries agree that they are *pūrvavat, śeṣavat* and *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa*.[13] The significance of these terms is less clear. Most commentators give instead of an explanation some stock examples; and they are not sufficient to clarify the meaning. What is worse, the same example may be used by the different commentaries for different kinds of inference.

In one interpretation, *pūrvavat* ('having the earlier') and *śeṣavat* ('having the remainder') are both causal inferences, the former from cause to effect, the latter vice versa. *Sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* ('seen together') here includes probably all non-causal (or not exclusively causal) inferences, where the *liṅga* and the *liṅgin* normally occur at the same time (Paramārtha's Chinese commentary in Takakusu 1904a, *Jaya-Maṅgalā* and *Yukti-Dīpikā*).[14]

In other commentaries *pūrvavat* ('like before') includes all causal inferences (or perhaps not only causal ones?), saying "here is A; we saw before that A and B occur together; now it will be like before, so there should be B". *Śeṣavat* ('like the rest') is inference from the quality of a sample to the whole. (*Gauḍapāda-Bhāṣya*, *Māṭhara-Vṛtti*, and less clearly *Sāṁkhya-Saptati-Vṛtti* *(V_1)* and *Sāṁkhya-Vṛtti* *(V_2)*.) Their conception of *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* ('generally seen') is particularly dim. The examples given are: "When Devadatta is seen at another place, he has been moving – so when the planets are seen at a new place, they also must have been moving." (*Gauḍapāda-Bhāṣya*[15]) "There is light on the sky, they say – so the moon must have risen" (*Māṭhara-Vṛtti*). "This mango-tree is in bloom – others

[12] I use the term 'syllogism' somewhat loosely: a standardised, formal expression of an inference.

[13] Of course, *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* occurs in SK 6 (see footnote 7), but it is not absolutely clear whether it is one of the kinds of inference. As a matter of fact, were it not for the unanimous tradition, within the context of the SK itself, SK 6 should have been translated: "Ascertainment is generally through perception; of imperceptible [objects] through inference…" But here we have besides the commentaries' testimony the formulation of SK 5: *tri-vidham anumānam ākhyātam*, "Inference, that has three kinds, has been told [elsewhere]". This seems to be a direct reference to the *Nyāya-Sūtra*: *atha tat-pūrvakaṁ tri-vidham anumānaṁ pūrvavac cheṣavat sāmānyato dṛṣṭaṁ ca.* ("Now inference, that has three kinds, follows upon that [= perception]: *pūrvavat, śeṣavat* and *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa*." 1.1.5) The impression that we have a quotation here is strengthened by the verb *ā-√khyā*, that occurs only here in the SK.

[14] This is the *Nyāya-Bhāṣya*'s first interpretation (to *Nyāya-Sūtra* 1.1.5; pp.146–149). The *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Kaumudī* (pp. 83–84) follows the *Nyāya-Bhāṣya*'s second interpretation (pp. 152–157) with not too clear examples, and elaborates more the concept of *vīta* and *avīta*; and very soon, Vācaspati Miśra sends us summarily to his *Nyāya-Vārttika-Tātparya-Ṭīkā*. This suggests that his interpretation here does not really belong to the Sāṁkhya tradition at all.

[15] The example is taken from the *Nyāya-Bhāṣya*'s first interpretation, pp.148–149.

must also be in bloom." (*Gauḍapāda-Bhāṣya*, *Māṭhara-Vṛtti*, *Sāṁkhya-Vṛtti* (V_2)). There is no suggestion as to what makes these examples different from the causal or the sampling types.

The analysis of inference into the parts *liṅga* and *liṅgin* may be original to Sāṁkhya. Though *liṅga* in similar meaning appears in the *Nyāya-Sūtra*, and quite frequently in the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra*, but its meaning there is less technical,[16] and neither work has *liṅgin*.[17] On the other hand, the *Nyāya-Bhāṣya* has exactly the same conception as the SK;[18] but of course, nothing definite can be said on the relative chronology of Pakṣilasvāmin and Īśvarakṛṣṇa.

In any case the conception, as said above, accords very well with the Sāṁkhyan, substance-oriented approach to causality. Seeing the sign, *liṅga* (normally a thing or a quality of a thing) we infer the signified, *liṅgin*, and that is again a thing or some quality of the thing. The relation between the sign and the signified is objectively neutral, though the terminology suggest otherwise. In Sanskrit, *liṅgin* – 'that which has the sign' – sounds somehow more fundamental; this is the important thing, the other is a mere sign, *liṅga*, of it. In the natural English equivalents, like marked, signed, signified, the suggested focus is the opposite: here the sign (or the user of the sign) does the work, and the signed etc. is its mere passive object. Therefore, the English rendering is stylistically not very apt, but it does not really matter, because the stylistic value of the original was as much misleading as its translation, though in the opposite direction. The relative value, weight or importance of the sign and the signified can be either way: from the unrest of the ants (a very insignificant *liṅga*), I infer the coming storm; from the pouring rain I infer that my handkerchief left in the garden is now wet (a very insignificant *liṅgin*).

The relation of the sign and the signified is objectively neutral, but epistemologically the situation is different: here the sign has priority. First we know the sign, then can we infer the signified. This is an important contrast between inference and causality: though an inference typically reproduces a causal relation, but not its order. We can infer from the cause to the effect, or from the effect to the cause. So the *kāraṇa* (cause) can be either the *liṅga* or the *liṅgin*, and similarly with the *kārya* (effect).

We know that *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* is the philosophically important form of inference, because this is the way to find out about imperceptible things;[19] but we do not know what it is. The commentaries, as we saw above, do not really help in clarifying the situation with their conflicting and often confused views.[20]

---

[16] Something like "a perceptible sign of something imperceptible", e.g. cognition is a *liṅga* of *ātman*.

[17] The *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* has *laiṅgika*, but its probable sense is 'inferential' (similarly Praśastapāda).

[18] *"tat-pūrvakam" ity anena liṅga-liṅginoḥ sambandha-darśanaṁ liṅga-darśanaṁ câ 'bhisambadhyate.* "'Follows upon that [i.e. perception]' – this refers to the seeing of the connection of the sign and the signified, and the seeing of the sign."(*ad Nyāya-Sūtra* 1.1.5)

[19] The examples occurring in the SK: the qualities of the Unmanifest – from the qualities of the Manifest, its effect (14); the Unmanifest is the cause of the manifest world – from the properties of the manifest phenomena (15); there is an immaterial soul – from the properties of the body and human experience (17); each person has a separate soul – from the properties of the body and human experience (18); the attributes of the soul – from its immateriality (19).

Probably the arguments proving the independent sources of valid knowledge (4) and moderate determinism (*sat-kārya-vāda*, 9) should also be considered *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa*, although their target is not absolutely imperceptible.

[20] The *Yukti-Dīpikā* is an exception; having suggested several interpretations, its last version is fairly clear, and – as we will see – comes close to my opinion.

kva-cid dharmeṇa dharmântarasyâvyabhicāram upalabhyâika-dharmôpalambhād bhinna-jātīye,'tyantânupalabdhasya dharmântarasya pratipattis – tadā sāmānyato-dṛṣṭaṁ. tad yathā: Devadatte gamanād deśântara-prāptim upalabhyâtyantâdṛṣṭaṁ jyotiṣāṁ deśântara-prāpter gamanam anumīyate.

Still we can find out quite a lot about it. First, it cannot be "any non-causal inference". Consider SK 8, where it is said of the *a-vyakta*, the Unmanifest basic form or state of nature (*prakṛti*):

> It is unobserved because of subtlety, not nonexistence; it is observed from its effect.
> And that effect is the Great[21] [= intellect] etc., different from *prakṛti* and also similar.[22]

Here we clearly infer the existence (and qualities) of something imperceptible, the *avyakta*; so it must be an inference of the *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* type. Nevertheless, the basis of inference, the *liṅga* will be the effect of the *liṅgin* – so it is a causal inference.

Then what can be the difference between the inference of fire from smoke, and of the Unmanifest from its effects? You do not see the fire right now, only the smoke. You do not see the Unmanifest, only its effects. The difference is that you have seen many fires, but never the Unmanifest, as it is imperceptible. This – right now not perceived – fire belongs to a category of which the members are visible; the Unmanifest does not.

But of course the second inference can work only because the Unmanifest also belongs to a generally perceptible category, though to a broad and vague one: it is a cause. We have seen many causes and effects, and know their relation (here comes in the *sat-kārya* theory); the effects of the Unmanifest are perceptible; so we can infer many attributes of the Unmanifest.

The structure of the reasoning in the two cases seems to be more or less parallel; I think the significant difference is in the type of the category the *liṅgin* belongs to. Fire is a species (*jāti*), or a natural kind; cause is a very general concept that can include many (perhaps all) natural kinds. This might be expressed by the term *sāmānya*, generality; so *sāmānyato dṛṣṭam anumānam* would mean something like "an inference realised (*dṛṣṭa*) through some generality", i.e. where the inference is not based on the species of the *liṅgin*, but on a category of higher generality.

4. Deep structure

If we try to reconstruct the whole process expressed in this theory of inference, we find that it is far more complex than the syllogism of two members suggests. In order to have a *liṅga*,

1. I have to perceive it (some vague blackness rising in the air),
2. I must already have the concept (smoke),
3. I have to realise that it is an example of the concept (the blackness is smoke).

For a correct inference I need also

> Somewhere having noticed the unfailing co-occurrence of a property with another property; perceiving one of the properties in a thing belonging to a different genus, we understand the other, absolutely imperceptible property: this is realised through similarity [*sāmānyato dṛṣṭam*]. As for example, having noticed, that *Devadatta* gets to another place by movement; in the case of heavenly bodies we infer from their getting to another place their absolutely invisible movement. (*Yukti-Dīpikā*: 86, lines 6–10.)

From the following argument it seems that *śeṣavat* and *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* are not mutually exclusive categories; at least that much is clear that a *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* type inference can be (but not necessarily is) causal.

[21] In the Sāṁkhya theory of the origin of the *tattva*s (fundamental existents) from the unmanifest form of matter or Nature first emerges the Great (*mahat*), and this is a synonym of Intellect (*buddhi*). Perhaps the word *mahat* is preferred in cosmological, *buddhi* in psychological contexts. The original form was probably Great Self, *ātmā mahān* (*Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* I.3.10 and II.3.7).

[22] 8. *Saukṣmyāt tad-an-upalabdhir, nâbhāvāt. Kāryatas tad-upalabdhiḥ:*
mahad-ādi tac ca kāryam, prakṛti-virūpaṁ, sarūpaṁ ca.

4. the concept of the *liṅgin* (fire)
5. the knowledge of the relation of the two kinds of things expressed in the concepts (fire is the cause of smoke; or, formally, when and where there is smoke, there is fire).

Point 2 (and 4) probably seemed unproblematic because of an implicit theory of natural kinds: the world falls neatly into categories with sharp contours, and our words express them. It is enough to see some examples of fish to be able to identify any future fish. This, though untrue, is an understandable naivety;[23] but it is not quite harmless. Consider the first argument for a non-material soul, *puruṣa*: *saṁghāta-parârthatvāt* ("because structures are for someone else's purpose", SK 17). Since the human body is a very complex structure, it must serve some other entity, and that is the soul. The argument depends on the vagueness of *saṁghāta* – if only man-made structures are included, then it will be irrelevant for the mind–body problem; if natural systems are included as well, then it will be untrue.[24]

Once we accept such a theory of natural kinds, point 3 is not very problematic; the associated questions of perceptual error are discussed at length in many works, including the commentaries of the SK, though not in the SK itself.

Point 1 is fairly evident, and though not mentioned explicitly in the SK, it is implied in the reference to *Nyāya-Sūtra* I.1.5 in SK 5 (see footnote 13).

The last point concerns a fundamental problem of epistemology, the problem of induction. How do we know universal statements? How do we know, based only on a limited number of experiences, that something is always true – that whenever there is smoke, there is always fire? This question is not addressed at all in the SK, and I think this needs some explanation. In a western-type, formal logic, where inference is applied to any universal proposition, however unnatural the universalization may be, the problem of induction is unavoidable. On the other hand, if we accept only natural kinds as terms in our syllogism, it might appear plausible that their relations (typically causal relations) are necessarily systematic, because they are based on natural law. The hypothesis that natural laws are reliable is unprovable; still it is an unavoidable presupposition of human knowledge.

In addition, in a not extremely formalised case, you do not need absolute universality – and you do not expect absolute infallibility in your conclusions. It is quite proper to say – I see some smoke there; and as smoke usually comes from fire, I think there must be some fire burning.

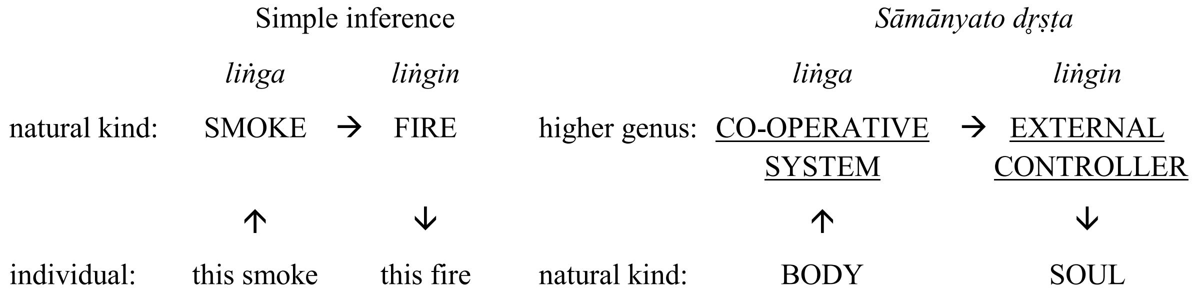
Thus the two-membered syllogism: *lingi liṅgāt* ("[we infer] the signed from the sign") is basically shorthand for three statements: 1. Here is a case of the *liṅga*. 2. All cases of the *liṅga*, by their very nature, occur only with some case of the *liṅgin*. 3. Therefore, here must also be a case of the *liṅgin*.

If the above analysis is correct, and the concept of natural kinds is a fundamental (although most probably not quite conscious) element in the simpler forms of inference, then the separation of *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* from the rest is fully justified and very important. This kind of inference is not about individuals (this smoke, this fire) through natural kinds and their relations (fire causes smoke). Here it is about natural kinds, one perceptible, the other not (body — soul), and uses more general categories and their relations to connect them (systems working in co-operation of the parts have an external

[23] A brilliant philosophical attempt (by Diṅnāga) to face the problem will be discussed in Chapter XII.

[24] The idea that concepts expressing perceptual entities need no definition and delineation might be responsible for the deplorable lack of justification for the *guṇa*-theory, which is probably the most fascinating feature of Sāṁkhyan ontology. We learn that *viṣādâtmaka[ṁ] ... niyamârtha[ṁ] ... guru varaṇakam eva tamaḥ* ("its essence is distress, its purpose is restraining; heavy and covering is Darkness", SK 12–13), but we get no arguments for why exactly these are the aspects of the *guṇa 'tamas'*, and why some others are not. As these are perceptible aspects, their unity is perhaps taken to be as evident as the unity of the appearance, smell and touch of the rose.

controller).[25] Here is a comparison in a flow-chart form (universals shown in capitals, higher-order universals also underlined):



Sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭa fits less smoothly into the two-membered form, because in it besides the higher genera the two natural kinds have to be named as well. (In a simple inference this is unnecessary and usually impossible, as the individuation of members of a natural kind is done normally with deictics, e.g. 'this' or 'here', without naming them – for most of them do not have individual names at all. Of course, sometimes we do use names, e.g. Socrates or Devadatta.) Taking as our example again *saṁghāta-parârthatvāt ... puruṣo 'sti* ("there is a soul, because structures are for someone else's purpose",[26] SK 17), a full analysis would be like this: 1. The body is a structure. 2. For every structure, there is always someone else whose purpose it serves. 3. Therefore, here must also be someone else than the body (whose purpose the body serves), and this we call 'soul'. If the terminology would be exactly parallel, 'structure' would be the *liṅga*, and 'someone else' (or rather, 'someone else whom it serves') the *liṅgin*. However, Īśvarakr̥ṣṇa's usage seems to suggest that here *saṁghāta-parârthatva* (the fact that structures serve someone else) is the *liṅga*, and *puruṣa* is the *liṅgin*. To look at it from the other side, if the simpler form would follow this usage, then instead of 'fire', 'this fire here' would be the *liṅgin*; and instead of 'smoke', 'the fact that smokes rise from fires' would be the *liṅga*. The latter seems unacceptable; let us try some other way.

Because the SK, though not actually a sūtra, is almost as concise at times, we may think that here we have actually two inferences compressed into one expression; and this expression (e.g. *saṁghāta-parârthatva*) is not the *liṅga*, but the rule stating the connection of the general concepts concerned (a structure serves external purpose). In the first inference ("The body serves someone else's purpose, because it is a compound structure"), the *liṅga* is the complexity, the *liṅgin* is the serving of external purpose. In the second inference ("There is something beyond the body, because it serves someone else"), the *liṅga* is the body's serving external purpose and the *liṅgin* is the soul (*puruṣa*). Now this *liṅgin* is not just any soul, but the particular soul connected to this body; so the common locus of the *liṅga* and the *liṅgin* is effectively the body.

Another example to check the validity of the suggested method, i.e. splitting *sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭa* inferences into two:

14. A*viveky-ādi hi siddhaṁ [vyaktam]; ...*
kāraṇa-guṇâtmakatvāt kāryasyâvyaktam api siddham.

[25] This is an interpretation of *adhiṣṭhānāt puruṣo 'sti* ("There is a soul, because of control", SK17).

[26] Probably the earliest formulation of the law of entropy – without some external control, chaos rules.

For it is proven [of the Manifest], that it is continuous[27] etc.;
because the effect has essentially the qualities[28] of the cause, it is proven of the Unmanifest, too.

Analysing into two inferences, we get clear *liṅgin*s and *liṅga*s again. 1. The Unmanifest has the same qualities as the Manifest, because it is its cause. 2. The Unmanifest is continuous, because it has the same qualities as the Manifest.

5. An attempt at formalisation

As the names of things are common nouns, in a modern formalisation it is simplest to represent them as one-place predicates. The locus is a particular thing or place; we can represent it with an individual name. So in the standard example ("There is fire on this mountain, because there is smoke"), where the *liṅga* is 'smoke', the *liṅgin* is 'fire', the locus is 'this mountain', and the general connection is "wherever there is smoke, there is fire". This could be formalised as follows,[29] using this shorthand:

$F^a(x)$ = 'there is fire at x'; $S^a(x)$ = 'there is smoke at x';[30] m = 'this mountain'.

$$\frac{S^a(m) \qquad \forall x\,[S^a(x) \supset F^a(x)]}{F^a(m)}$$

When the *liṅga* and the *liṅgin* are not things, but qualities, and the locus is the substance of which they are qualities, the structure and the modern formalisation are exactly the same, as can be seen by a simple re-wording of the above example: "the mountain is fiery, because it is smoky".

In the inferences used in philosophy, *sāmānyato dr̥ṣṭeṣv anumāneṣu*, the loci are normally not individuals, but predicates expressing natural kinds. The more general categories used to connect the

---

27 The expression *aviveky-ādi* clearly refers back to the list in SK 11. The meaning is not, as usually understood, 'non-discriminating', but 'not having separation'. *Prakr̥ti* (Nature) is unconscious (*a-cetana*), as it is mentioned explicitly in the same list; but in its subtlest form, the *buddhi* (intelligence), it is able to discriminate – even between the *puruṣa* (soul) and matter: see SK 37.

28 What qualities are exactly meant is far from clear. The standard Sāṁkhya *guṇa*s cannot be, because every manifest thing has the same three *guṇa*s – it is not specific to the cause–effect relation. The Vaiśeṣika *guṇa*s are again impossible as they include *saṁkhyā*, number: and the Unmanifest is one, whereas the Manifest is plural, *an-eka* (SK 10). Probably something like "the fundamental material qualities", like colour and weight are not very far from the mark.

29 The notation used:

Variables (formal pronouns) are x and y; predicates are in capitals, second order predicates are underlined. In an inference first come the premises, then a long line, then the conclusion.

$\forall x$	'for every x'
$\exists x$	'There exists some x that'
$p \supset q$	'if p then q'
$p \equiv q$	'p iff [if and only if] q' (or 'if p then q, AND if q then p')
$p \,\&\, q$	'p and q'

Some not too important complexities will be tacitly avoided, as I feel it has no effect on the general purport, and for most readers the text might be appalling even so as it is now. Those who will notice these minor inaccuracies will be able to rectify them for themselves.

30 $F^a(x)$ and $S^a(x)$ are best regarded as defined via the more basic predicates F(x) = 'x is fire', S(x) = 'x is smoke' and A(x,y) = 'x is at/in/on y':

$$F^a(x) \equiv \exists y\,[F(y) \,\&\, A(y,x)]$$
$$S^a(x) \equiv \exists y\,[S(y) \,\&\, A(y,x)]$$

loci behave as both first- and second-order[31] predicates. If we underline a predicate in its second-order role, this rule seems natural:

$$\underline{T}(B) \equiv \forall x\, [B(x) \supset T(x)]$$ [32]

E.g. T = 'complex structure', B = 'body'; then it says, "Body is a complex structure iff all bodies are complex structures".

With two-place predicates, the relation of first- and second-order predication becomes a little more complex. E.g. with C(a,b) = 'a is the cause of b':

$$\underline{C}(F, S) \equiv \forall x\, \{S(x) \supset \exists y\, [F(y)\ \&\ C(y,x)]\}$$

I.e. "Fire is the cause of smoke iff for every occurrence of smoke there is a fire that is its cause."

Let us try to formalise the second example analysed above:
1. The Unmanifest has the same qualities as the Manifest, because it is its cause.
2. The Unmanifest is continuous, because it has the same qualities as the Manifest.

Vocabulary: U = 'unmanifest', A = '*avivekin*, continuous', M = 'manifest',[33] C(a,b) = 'a is the cause of b'

(1.1)	$\underline{C}(U, M)$	The Unmanifest is the cause of the Manifest
(1.2)	$\forall Y.\forall Z\, \{\underline{C}(Y, Z) \supset \forall \underline{X}\, [\underline{X}(Z) \supset \underline{X}(Y)]\}$	The cause has the 'qualities' of the effect
(1.3)	$\forall \underline{X}\, [\underline{X}(M) \supset \underline{X}(U)]$ [34]	The Unmanifest has the 'qualities' of the Manifest

(2.1)	$\underline{A}(M)$	The Manifest is continuous
(2.2)	$\forall \underline{X}\, [\underline{X}(M) \supset \underline{X}(U)]$	The Unmanifest has the 'qualities' of the Manifest
(2.3)	$\underline{A}(U)$	The Unmanifest is continuous

---

[31] A first-order predicate can be predicated of individuals; a second-order predicate can be predicated of first-order predicates.

In many cases, the use of second-order predicates could have been avoided, thus making the formalisation more conventional, but at the same time quite more complicated. However, the predicate $\underline{Q}$ introduced in fn. 34 is irreducibly second-order, and in a strictly correct formalisation, it would be necessary. Second-order logic (quantification over predicates) is in any case needed in the formulae (1.3) and (2.2) below.

The general motive to use second-order predicates in our formalisation is that it is closer to natural language and that it suggests the intensional character of the predication. When I say that "The tiger is a carnivorous animal", my intention is to express that 'carnivorous' (C) is an essential property of 'tiger' (T): $\underline{C}(T)$, while in the proposition "every tiger has a unique identifier" (U), the relation is purely extensional: $\forall x\, [T(x) \supset U(x)]$. Of course the intensional relation implies the extensional: $\underline{C}(T) \supset \forall x\, [T(x) \supset C(x)]$, i.e. if the tiger is carnivorous, then all tigers are carnivorous.

[32] Strictly speaking only $\underline{T}(B) \equiv \mathbf{N}\forall x\, [B(x) \supset T(x)]$ would be true (where **N** means 'necessarily'); in the present form, the intensionality of the second-order predication is lost. Without the necessity-operator only

$$\underline{T}(B) \supset \forall x\, [B(x) \supset T(x)]$$

holds.

[33] Although in this formalisation we could have used for the Unmanifest and the Manifest individual names instead of predicates, but as the Manifest is explicitly said to be many (SK 10), it seemed more correct to stick to the predicate notation.

[34] Here the formalisation is clearly too strong, as e.g. *anitya* (transient) could be a value of $\underline{X}$, and it is true of the Manifest, but false of the Unmanifest (SK 10). A more acceptable formalisation would need the second-order predicate $\underline{Q}$ = 'quality', or perhaps 'fundamental material quality' (see fn 28):

$$\forall \underline{X}\, \{[\underline{Q}(X)\ \&\ \underline{X}(M)] \supset \underline{X}(U)\},$$

and similarly in (1.2), (2.1) and (2.2).

In Īśvarakṛṣṇa's original formulation, (2.3) was the *liṅgin*, and (1.2) was mentioned as if it were the *liṅga*. Of course, (2.1) and (1.1) might be assumed to be known from SK 14 and 15–16. If we follow the suggested analysis into two inferences, both will have a parallel structure to a simple inference. However, in the second one its natural expression mentions the general rule (the conditional member, (2.2)), because the common part between (2.1) and (2.3) is not their locus, but the (second-order) predicate; so the connecting rule (2.2) would not be evident, if – following the standard usage – we had said, "The Unmanifest is continuous, because the Manifest is continuous."

As in fact both premises are necessary for an inference; but the first premise can be reconstructed, if we know the second and the conclusion – it is difficult to say what would have been Īśvarakṛṣṇa's terminological preference. He could have said that (a) the *liṅga* is always the first premise (the known fact), but we sometimes mention instead of the *liṅga* the second premise (the connecting rule), when it is easier to follow. Alternatively, that (b) we normally use the fact as *liṅga*; but when it is clearer that way, we use the rule as *liṅga*. The second option would mean a radical break with the original, object-oriented concept of the *liṅga*, but in Sanskrit with its excessive compound-building and nominalising possibilities, it is easily done.

6. Conclusion

We found that inference in Sāṁkhya is not a formal procedure or linguistic relation, rather an attempt at reproducing in human cognition real structures (mostly causal connections). As the world is viewed as made up of substances, causality is first of all a relation between things, and so the typical form of inference seems to be from one thing to another. This is expressed in the syllogism of two members, where the *liṅga* plays the role of the premise and the *liṅgin* represents the conclusion. This 'syllogism' is not supposed to contain all elements of the actual cognitive process, it just mentions the focal points: what we infer and on what basis. The elements only implied in this sūtra-like formulation are: the common locus of *liṅga* and *liṅgin*; and the general connection between them.

In the everyday forms of inference (*pūrvavat* and *śeṣavat*[35]), the locus is an individual. The *liṅga* and the *liṅgin* are *jāti*s: first-order, one-place predicates expressing natural kinds (in Aristotelian terminology, secondary substances or species). This seems sufficient to handle the problem of induction: as they are natural kinds, their relations are law-like.

In the *sāmānyato dṛṣṭa* type both the *liṅga* and the *liṅgin* are easiest analysed as second-order predicates, expressing higher genera or more abstract categories. What complicates matters is that they are also often two-place predicates, i.e. relations; and instead of a single locus, we often find two related loci – both natural kinds. Though analysing some of these inferences into two we sometimes can produce syllogisms that are similar to the simple cases in their formal structure, still it is doubtful whether Īśvarakṛṣṇa had this understanding. Quite possibly he did not try to reproduce the clear structure of the standard inferences here, and he would have applied the terms *liṅga* and *liṅgin* loosely in the general sense of 'experiential ground' and 'what it proves'.

Perhaps this little vagueness made it possible that inferences in the SK can mostly be analysed with its own conception of inference. The *liṅga-liṅgin* description is not too specific (though far from universal), still it is meaningful – it can be used as a practical first step in analysing the structure and thus checking the validity of many arguments.

[35] This will not hold for *śeṣavat*, if it is understood as the sampling type (the first spoonful of the soup is too salty – the rest will be also). As this does not occur in the SK, it was not analysed here.

XI. Polysemy, misunderstanding and reinterpretation

1. Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas

“Plato is my friend, but Truth is an even greater friend.” This Aristotelian[1] attitude is fundamental to European philosophy and its underlying ethos is shared by most, perhaps all important authors. This led to the somewhat amusing consequence that too many of the greatest philosophers, although perhaps stating their admiration for some earlier masters, clearly say that so far everybody was wrong, but now they got the final answer. Not surprisingly, they never consider tradition or inherited wisdom a valid source of knowledge. Some say that humans are born with an empty mind (*tabula rasa,* blank slate), others think that there are some inborn concepts (*ideae innatae*), but they all agree that all we learn we get from experience and reasoning. No one cares to mention the social sources of our knowledge, although a short reflection would clearly show that most of what we think we know, we have learned from other people. It is in interesting contrast to India where the “word” as a source of information (*śabda-prāmāṇya*) is considered by many schools the most important and in some areas the only authoritative source of knowledge. Even those (like some Buddhists) who seemingly reject it give it serious consideration and in fact only subsume it under the category inference.

Plato was Aristotle’s teacher for almost twenty years, until his death, and Aristotle inherited many ideas and approaches from him, yet he clearly disagreed with his master on several points and did not hesitate to say so in very clear words. Now this would have been something inconceivable in ancient India. To say that one’s *guru* was wrong! And this loyalty extended back through the whole line of teachers and all that was remembered of their teaching, up to the often legendary founder of the school.

If we look for an explanation for this difference, perhaps the different attitude to religion comes first to mind. In Europe, philosophy is typically this-worldly while in India many schools are

---

[1] This is a proverbial summary of what Aristotle actually wrote in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1096a 15:

δόξειε δ’ ἂν ἴσως βέλτιον εἶναι καὶ δεῖν ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ γε τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὰ οἰκεῖα ἀναιρεῖν, ἄλλως τε καὶ φιλοσόφους ὄντας: ἀμφοῖν γὰρ ὄντοιν φίλοιν ὅσιον προτιμᾶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

“Still perhaps it would appear desirable, and indeed it would seem to be obligatory, especially for a philosopher, to sacrifice even one’s closest personal ties in defense of the truth. Both are dear to us, yet ’tis our duty to prefer the truth.” (Aristotle 1996: 8)

Interestingly the context is a criticism of the Platonic theory of ideas, i.e. real universals – the main target of the *apoha* theory, the subject of our next chapter.

predominantly religious and even the rest have a distinct religious affiliation. And religion is of course the most conservative human institution, quite incapable of revising its sacred scripture.

However, this attitude is not confined to philosophy only; it is clearly present in all scholarly traditions. I think the fundamental reason for it can be found in the structure of society in general. In Europe, the basic unit of society is the individual while in India it is the caste. Caste, which – far from being a cunning device of class oppression – is an astonishingly archaic, tribal structure of social organisation, not only defining its members' position in society, but also giving them a complex network of connections, protection, law and order, traditions and religion. To lose one's caste is to lose one's identity. In consequence, group loyalty generally is extremely strong and even if somebody breaks with it, it is only to join another school and become its loyal member. (A notable exception would be the Buddha who did not join an existing tradition – but created a new community instead…)

Ironically, the philosophical ideals of the two cultures are just the opposite of what one would expect based on their social background. In Europe, it is the man in society, perhaps a little above it, helping the common welfare of the people, uplifting morality, designing ideal forms of government. In India it is the isolated individual, the lonely saint; emancipation, starting with the cutting of all worldly ties, living the life of the wandering mendicant or the hermit in the forest; in some schools even the word for the highest aim is *kaivalya,* loneliness. Perhaps in both worlds philosophers desired what they were most in need of?

Significant schools could be far weightier than individual philosophers could. They were important factors of society in general and therefore they also had their ideological, religious and power commitments. They were in need of financial support and they often found it in the support of kings. Hindu schools (with Brahmin members only) could generally count on the backing of the priestly class as well, and they naturally helped to uphold the Brahmins' claims to religious monopoly: all Hindu schools, however incongruent it seemed, accepted the authority of the Vedic scripture. So there were very material motives for and consequences of the strong group loyalties.

The most obvious consequence of this traditionalism is the dominance of secondary works: most important treatises are in the form of commentaries; even Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's huge and highly original work, the *Nyāya-Mañjarī* (in two bulky volumes) is technically a commentary, largely on the first few sentences of the *Nyāya-Sūtra.* This just produces a fairly boring general image of the philosophical literature; far more damaging is the inability to give up antiquated theses, the insistence on at times plainly idiotic positions (like "sound is eternal"). Very often a modern reader has the feeling that our authors are not interested in truth, and therefore not interested in what others say – only in order to defend their own position and to crush their opponents (seemingly; convincing only their own followers).

Cultural relativism is here, I think, quite out of place. It will not do to say that Indian scholarship just upholds different values from our own. A scholar should be interested only in truth: how things in fact are. This is not the Greek approach – this is a universal. Human knowledge is not only a social game or a ritual, although to a large part it is. It may help to predict and so it has an adaptive value (as most other games have). Even studying Indian philosophy can be adaptive – not only giving fresh ideas to modern philosophy but it can also help in understanding how and why a philosophy is influential. How to manipulate and how to resist manipulation. How to understand very different people. How a cultural phenomenon behaves. Etc. etc.

Of course even in the modern world many factors hinder this ideal of a pure quest for truth: private emotional interests (e.g. someone with a great sex life may be deaf to ascetic values), ideological barriers, the interest to *seem* a great scholar and to conform to the majority in the field, to

name only a few. Still it seems unavoidable to conclude that this peculiar Indian inability for modernisation was a dominant factor in precluding the admirable ancient scholarly tradition from fulfilling its promise.

2. Ways around crippling traditionalism

In spite of all conservatism some change was unavoidable, the most visible impulse for it coming from the criticism of rival schools. As they were fighting for power, support and influence, they were looking for weaknesses in their opponents' positions; and once a weakness was clearly identified and exposed, it demanded some response.

Theoretically, a Darwinist story could perhaps be expected, old schools with their outdated normative texts simply dying out and new traditions emerging. That is not what we in fact see. Even long dead schools like Sāṁkhya and Vaiśeṣika could pass on their teachings and to a large extent also the authoritativeness of their scriptures (to Vedānta and Yoga and to Nyāya respectively). The failure of an evolutionist solution to rigidity may be due to the very cause of the problem itself: a new school could have no ancient and therefore respectable texts and masters. Therefore, even genuinely new traditions like the different schools of Vedānta or the Hare Krishnas reuse texts millennia old like the Upaniṣads or the Bhagavad-Gītā, thereby perpetuating the problem.

There were some available options for change. First, the presumed infallibility of the ancient texts did not prohibit additions to the inherited set of teachings. And we find it everywhere: commentaries routinely discuss problems not even mentioned in their root texts, like Uddyotakara refuting at length the *apoha*-theory in his *Nyāya-Vārttika*.[2] Even in case of such additions the authors often feel it proper to state anachronistically that this is what the old master meant. A funny example is when the Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra commentators say that the word 'and' (*ca*) in the list of qualities stands for seven qualities missing from the list.[3]

When an old position became untenable, simple addition was not sufficient. One strategy was simply to forget about the old position – not to reject it publicly of course, but to avoid referring to it at all. This phenomenon occurs everywhere in the world, especially in religions, but its presence is very marked in India where Hinduism is generally considered a Vedic religion yet most Hindus have no idea at all what a Vedic sacrifice consists in.

Another strategy developed perhaps by the Buddhists was to refer to several levels of truth. In its simplest form it meant that although a given scriptural statement was not true in the absolute sense but in the circumstances, it was the right thing to say. Either because of the limited capabilities of the audience, or as a first step in gradually reaching a deeper insight, or perhaps because in the specific

---

[2] In the commentary on *Nyāya-Sūtra* 2.2.66: *Vyakty-ākr̥ti-jātayas tu padârthaḥ.* ("The meaning of the word is the individual, the form and the universal.") The *Sūtra* itself, being earlier than Diṅnāga, does not know of the *apoha*-theory, although the word (in the form *apohya*) occurs once at 3.1.63 with the sense 'exclusion' from a list.

[3] The list of seventeen qualities is at *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* 1.1.5.: *Rūpa-rasa-gandha-sparśāḥ, saṅkhyāḥ, parimāṇāni, pr̥thaktvaṁ, saṁyoga-vibhāgau, paratvâparatve, buddhayaḥ, sukha-duḥkhe, icchā-dveṣau, prayatnaś* ***ca*** *guṇāḥ*. ("The qualities are colour, taste, smell, touch; numbers; sizes; separateness; contact, separation; farness, nearness; cognitions; happiness, suffering; desire, hatred; **and** effort.") On which Praśastapāda remarks: *Iti kaṇṭhôktāḥ saptadaśa. Ca-śabda-samuccitāś ca gurutva-dravatva-sneha-saṁskārâdr̥ṣṭa-śabdāḥ saptâivêty evam caturviṁśatir guṇāḥ*. (*Padārtha-Dharma-Saṁgraha* [5].) "These seventeen are stated explicitly. And the word 'and' stands collectively for these seven: weight, liquidity, lubricity, inertia, the [two] invisible forces and sound. So there are twenty-four qualities."

context the inaccuracy was irrelevant. The teacher speaks as a good parent to a child, telling only as much as the kid needs and is able to understand at the time.

The last resort was to reinterpret the old teaching, obviously without explicitly saying so. This again occurs everywhere, but in India it is so frequent that it seriously plagues any effort to understand long-term developments in philosophy. Many factors contribute to the feasibility of this stratagem like the peculiar structure of the Sanskrit language, its position and use in society but the most apparent among them was the nature of the scholarly tradition, especially in the earlier ages.

Part of this phenomenon has been excellently characterised by Ingalls (1968: vi–vii):

> [I]t is a natural form of communication, resulting from the social cohesion of the Indian circles in which philosophy was discussed. Indian philosophers were banded together in small groups of teacher and pupils, following set rituals of worship and well-established regimens of exercise and meditation. Their writings are directed inward, are addressed to a narrow circle of colleagues and pupils, or, in the rare cases of outward direction, are concerned with refuting the views of other tightly knit groups. There was no attempt, at least until some centuries after Diṅnāga's time, to set forth philosophical ideas in a fully explained exposition that a general reader might understand. For in Diṅnāga's time there were no general readers; such persons as could read had been trained in very special disciplines, first in Sanskrit grammar, and then in ritual exegesis, philosophy, law, or some such field. Now, the more inner-directed a group's communication, the more elliptical will its expression be. Persons who have lived with each other many years, who have passed through the same education and had many of the same experiences, need mention only the briefest selection of thought and their companions can conceive the whole vision and can set it in order with other visions just as it was ordered in the speaker's mind. One may observe this ellipsis in the conversations of man and wife, in the shop talk of artisans, and in the communication of workers engaged in any specialized research.

Another, perhaps more apparent aspect of the problem is related not in general to the communication of these philosophers with each other, but more particularly to the kinds of texts we have. Human language is very effective for the task it evolved to fulfil: two persons talking to each other abut their surroundings or at least about things they both know quite well. The context is present and familiar, and if the hearer still cannot follow what she is told, she can always ask. Now the effectivity of communication rapidly decreases as we move away from this natural setting. If the listener is not allowed to ask and if the context is not that familiar, like when you listen to a lecture on philosophy, chances are great that you miss several points and misunderstand others, as any university examiner knows painfully well. A further difficulty arises when there is a fixed text that you read or hear from someone else, not from the person who actually thinks the thoughts expressed. And so even in the case of an exceptionally lucid thinker and good writer like Hume who wrote voluminous books using a well-known language with a long tradition of writing such texts, scholars can debate for centuries about his meaning. The situation becomes still worse when the form of the text is unnaturally constrained, as with poems or songs.

Now early Indian philosophical texts were either oral or at least modelled on the oral tradition, and therefore they had to be short in order to be easily memorised. They were more memory aids than self-standing explications.[4] The teacher gave free explanations and the texts were not supposed to be understandable without them.[5] They were not intended to be read by the general reader, by outsiders or

---

[4] "[I]n reality these so-called Indian 'philosophical treatises' are more analogous with indexes, tables of contents, telephone directories, sets of algebraic equations, lists of linguistic rules, dictionaries, or annotated bibliographies." Larson (1980: 375); see also Chapter VII.7.

[5] However, we of course do not have these explanations; and surely, they changed from generation to generation. There are some "autocommentaries", but I feel that most of them are at best the notes of direct disciples of the master and therefore their understanding is not necessarily perfect and their explanations are far from exhaustive.

rivals. For the ease of memorization they were extremely short and therefore often quite elliptic – this is the classical sūtra-style.

In addition, they were often versified which might help memorization but poetic licence usually resulted in sentences even more difficult to decipher. Frequently the modern reader who lacks the oral tradition of say 1500 years ago can only say that a given sentence means either this, or its exact opposite, or something completely different. Moreover, these texts were not at all unambiguous for the classical Indians themselves, even of the same school – and therefore new meanings could easily be read into them, even when a commentator honestly tried to understand the position of the old author.

The most devastating tool of reinterpretation was to change the meaning of key terms. This could also happen involuntarily and remain undetected even by opponents. Like when a philosopher, pondering over a new problem and a traditional dictum considered relevant thereto, hits upon an understanding of a term that would make the old saying both meaningful and acceptable to more modern needs. Many other processes (among them the use of a term by different schools) contributed to the result that most important philosophical terms have several, often widely divergent meanings, the best-known examples are perhaps *ātman* (its meanings ranging from body to soul), *brahman* (from magic to universal spirit) and *dharma* (from quality to religion). Or to take a more technical example, the related terms *sāmānya* and *viśeṣa* ('universal' and 'difference') were understood in at least five different ways (Shastri 1964: 312–313).

In the history of the *apoha* theory, misunderstanding and radical reinterpretation played perhaps an unusually significant role. By now, it is common knowledge that the two key authors, Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti were expounding different theories in spite of their using the same term and Dharmakīrti being the classical and loyal commentator of the older master.[6] There are clear signs that for some contemporaries it was obvious that many of the arguments used in the long debate were misdirected because they presupposed another meaning of a key term. Already Uddyotakara (*Nyāya-Vārttika* ad *Nyāya-Sūtra* 2.2.66) said on no less than seven points that Diṅnāga's arguments against the Nyāya position were based on a misunderstanding. Similarly Jayanta, after introducing Kumārila Bhaṭṭa's arguments against the *apoha* theory at great length, simply presents the Buddhist answer as "they who said this did not understand the Buddhist position".[7] It was not Jayanta's own literary fiction either: "In his *Tattvasaṅgraha,* Śāntarakṣita tried to refute the arguments of Kumārila, Bhāmaha, and others who have rejected Diṅnāga's version of the apoha theory. According to Śāntarakṣita, these criticisms leveled against the apoha theory are based on misunderstanding."[8]

In the next chapter I will attempt to find the original meaning of precisely this term, *apoha*, and I think that the result will be both surprising and highly rewarding since the concept seems to be not only quite original but also it suggests a very exciting philosophical position on the old question of universals.

[6] E.g. Pind (1999: 330): "Dharmakīrti's version of the *apoha* theory departs completely from the underlying epistemological rationale that justifies its central position in Diṅnāgan *pramāṇavāda*."

[7] *Tad etad avidita-bauddha-siddhântānām abhidhānam*. *Nyāya-Mañjarī,* Apoha (3), [1].

[8] Sen 2011: 185; and fn. 22 on p. 203 thereto: "*any[ā]pohâparijñānād evam ete kudṛṣṭayaḥ / svayaṁ naṣṭā durātmāno nāśayanti parān api* (TS, ed. Shastri, 1002)." ("These people with wrong views misunderstand the *apoha* theory, and therefore, themselves lost, will cause the loss of others.")

XII. An unknown solution to the problem of universals

Diṅnāga's *apoha* theory

1. Universals and interests

In contrast to most philosophical problems, universals seem irrelevant to human existence and in fact quite boring. In spite of this universals were the focus of intensive debate for more than two millennia not only in Europe but also in India. The reason for this beyond the challenge to scholars of a difficult puzzle can be the indirect import of the question. Although perhaps uninteresting in itself, it can prove the existence of eternal, immaterial entities. Real universals can provide, as Plato thought, the proper objects of *a priori* speculation; without them, we are left with sheer empiricism, no possibility of access to metaphysical truth or higher values, and philosophy loses all its weight. As all general statements (including, among others, philosophical or scientific theses) use universal concepts, the objectivity of universals is decisive in the expressibility of facts and therefore the knowability of the world.

What is a universal? Basically, the meaning of a word or the reference (or content) of a concept. When I say, "The dog is barking", I am speaking of a single, concrete individual (or particular), say Hector, the eight year old male Labrador living in my neighbour's garden. But what am I talking about when I say that the dog is an animal, or that a dog can kill a deer? In the first case, we could think that it is just short for "All dogs are animals". However, a small or sick dog or a puppy clearly cannot kill a deer. So perhaps I was talking about the general concept of dog. But can a concept kill a deer? Well, whatever it is, we call it a universal. In modern logic it corresponds to (the intension of) a predicate.

Whereas for Plato the paradigmatic case of a universal was a quality (*par excellence* "good"), in most Indian debates the focus is on substances, especially on countable natural kinds with a simple Sanskrit term to express them, the standard example being "cow". It is often difficult or impossible to specify whether a given argument or position was also intended to cover uncountable substances (like water or iron), sensible qualities (white, sour), characterizations by activity (tourist) and more complex descriptions (eleven-headed dragon). Usually the predicates expressed by finite verbs (walked, hates) were not addressed.

The two basic positions on universals, although found in many forms and hidden by a confusing proliferation of terminology, can be conventionally labelled nominalism and realism, suggesting the

intuition that universals are "names" or "things" (*nomen* or *res*). Both positions are simple enough and equally convincing, but they exclude each other.

A nominalist would say that in the real world there are material things, always at a given space and time – i.e., individuals only. Universals are intangible and invisible, they are nowhere in space, and they are unchanging – unlike anything real. They are abstractions: we group together things and other phenomena from our particularly human viewpoint, form generalised concepts and give them names.

A realist holds that to think that universals are mere names or concepts is ridiculous. Universals are clearly facts of the real world irrespectively of human cognition. That a given substance is a lion is reality in the strictest sense: its father and mother were also lions; its cubs will be lions. And if a nominalist does not recognise its lion-ness, it may feed on her…

The possibility of these two positions rest on the simple facts of life. This dog is not the same as that dog, they are completely separate, and they have different form, size, qualities, histories and future. Yet we call both of them dogs, and we have quite clear and not at all arbitrary criteria for doing so. The difficulty in understanding the situation comes from language being an unconscious ability, like e.g. walking. In practice, we all know how to walk or speak; but that does not mean that it is an easy task to find out how the process works. Some more physical aspects are relatively easy to identify, like the bones and muscles of the leg, or the working of the lungs and the mouth, while the more mental activities like keeping the balance or referring can be really difficult to understand fully.

In India, the problem of universals was far from theoretical only. In effect as soon as the question was asked the philosopher's religious affiliation determined his answer to it. Simply put, a Hindu had to be realist and a Buddhist was almost forced to be a nominalist. Let us have a look at these ideological interests.

For a Hindu the Vedas are eternal. Although deep in the past the Vedic hymns were considered just powerful prayers to a god created by their inspired authors, in the Brahmanic age this changed radically. Vedic ritual became pure magic, working automatically, not dependent on the will of any god. Consequently, the texts used in the ritual were also understood as magical spells, i.e. part of the eternal laws of the universe. Therefore the historical authors could not invent or create the formulas, they only found them or received their knowledge; this was normally expressed as "they saw it". And if the texts are eternal their words must be also, and so the meanings of the words must be eternal and quite independent of all the transitory entities of the material world.[1]

There seemed to be one way around this predetermined realism: even if the texts are eternal, their meaning is not necessarily so, as a magical spell need not have a meaning at all! Surprisingly enough this position was seriously suggested quite early in the history of Indian thought.[2] However, in the end it will not help, as the spells are themselves universals even without their meaning. A single recitation by a person on a given occasion would be a particular, but the spell itself is an eternal entity, a phonetic universal at least, like the sound 'a'.

Another, less compelling motive for realism was that most Hindus (before Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta school) thought that the world as we perceive it is real. In addition, if we are to know and

---

[1] This is the position of orthodox Brahmanism (Mīmāṁsā). Later Hindus would hold that the Vedas were created by God at the creation of the universe, but this difference is here negligible – still static, real universals are presupposed.

[2] By Kautsa, as described in Yāska's treatise on etymology, the Nirukta (1.15): *...iti Kautsaḥ, anarthakā hi mantrāḥ* ("…says Kautsa, for the *mantras* [spells] are meaningless"). See Staal (1990: 234, 373–375). As Yāska is believed to predate Pāṇini, Kautsa must have lived before the 4th century BCE.

understand the world, our words must be able to express what there is objectively; and since we use universal terms, universals are presumably also objective, i.e. real.

It would be tempting to say that in consequence Buddhism took almost automatically the contrary position, nominalism. However, although puerile negativism regarding an opponent's statements is far from unusual in Indian traditions, I am not aware of any case where somebody chose his own position in a philosophical debate only to differ from his rivals. Further, it is not clear if the general contrast Hinduism–Buddhism already existed; at least I do not know how it could have been expressed in contemporary Sanskrit. Perhaps Buddhism at that time was one among several Indian traditions not yet considered specifically more distinct than the rest from each other.

Still there were very strong grounds for Buddhist philosophy to reject a realist theory of universals. The most important among them was of a doctrinal nature: in Buddhism, everything is transitory, so there can be nothing eternal – so to accept real universals is an impossibility.[3] The transitoriness of existence was very emphatic in the tradition: the very last words of the Buddha were, quite aptly at his own departure, *vaya-dhammā saṅkhārā* ("passing away is the nature of compound things"). *Sarvaṁ kṣaṇikam* ("everything is momentary") is just a stronger expression for the same insight; it is also the unavoidable conclusion of a proper analysis of constant change. Moreover, the universal flux is not an independent, accidental thesis in Buddhism. The very starting point of the Buddha's teaching is human suffering, and its strongest root is the unavoidability of loosing everything once dear to us. The three characteristics of existence, suffering, transitoriness and insubstantiality are inseparable.

Already Nāgārjuna demonstrated that such usage of language as presupposes static entities leads to contradictions. Strangely enough, he was mostly understood as therefore rejecting the reality of everyday experience, not of static universals: perhaps because he did not use the terminology of universals; also because he talked in terms of human thinking and concepts, not language and words. Furthermore, he did not propose an alternative, non-realist theory of universals; but later Diṅnāga in developing the *apoha*-theory was probably motivated by Nāgārjuna (Bronkhorst 1999a).

In addition, Buddhism had a problem with scriptures. Although its original strongly rationalistic and experimental approach was gradually superseded by a strong dependence on the Buddha's infallible teachings, as an enlightened being came to be considered omniscient in one sense or another, still Buddhism could not claim to have an eternal scripture like the Vedas. Therefore it was handy to prove that the Vedas cannot be eternal either (thereby accidentally suggesting that those who say so are not trustworthy at all); and the denial of real universals (that should be eternal) seemed adequate for the job. No surprise that Diṅnāga extended the *apoha*-theory to linguistic units as well, showing that not only the meanings of words, but also the words themselves are not real universals at all.[4]

Lastly, in its quest for freedom, Buddhism from the very beginning had a strong tendency to turn away from the world, and with the coming of Mahāyāna, this devaluation received metaphysical underpinnings. The material word was considered irrelevant, unknowable, and perhaps also irreal; understanding that it is just a flow of ungraspable and volatile particulars could motivate the introversion of the disciples. How you feel depends only on your conceptualizations and not on hard

---

[3] As emphasised already by Mookerjee: "For Mookerjee it is clear that the apoha doctrine arises out of the Buddhists' unrelenting denial of anything permanent in the universe, which in turn prompts a denial of universals as existing independent of the mind that conceives them." Hayes (1988: 18)

[4] Pind (1991). In this Diṅnāga is following Bhartṛhari: "the original "quality (*guṇa*)" that Kātyāyana had referred to is elevated by Bhartṛhari to the status of a universal, which is bifurcated in two, namely, into "a word universal (*śabdajāti*) and a thing universal (*arthajāti*)."" Hayes (1988: 31) describing the view of Herzberger (1986: 110).

external facts – so you are (or can be) free. The *apoha* theory denying that there is any objective external reality corresponding to our words and concepts could be very serviceable for those who could understand it; *apoha'*s negativity fits nicely with the negativity of more familiar concepts like *anātman* (no-soul = insubstantiality) or even of the fundamental Buddhist aim, *duḥkha-nirodha* (cessation of suffering).

2. Apoha theories

The word *apoha* (and related forms, *apohati, apoḍha, apohya* etc.) was not too frequent in the older literature and had the meaning 'sending or driving away, expelling': *yas tamo 'rka ivâpohan para-sainyam amitra-hā* ("the killer of enemies, who, driving away the opposing army like the sun drives away darkness…" MBh VI.15.7). Usually another preverb, *vi-* was prefixed to it without much change of meaning, perhaps making it a little more emphatic and inimical. Etymologically it is from *apa+ūh-* and that seems to be a weakened form of *apa+vah-,* 'carry away'.

It appears in a philosophical role in Vasubandhu's (ca. 360 CE) *Abhidharma-Kośa* 6.4:

> *Yatra bhinne na tad-buddhir, anyâpohe dhiyā ca tat*
> *ghaṭâmbuvat saṁvṛti-sat. Paramârtha-sad anyathā.*

This rather cryptic stanza is normally understood (and so translated into Chinese and Tibetan), following the *Bhāṣya*, as saying:

> Where, if a thing is broken, it is no longer cognised;
> and if [its] other [qualities] are removed by the mind [it is no longer cognised]: that is
> (as 'pot' and 'water', [respectively]) conventionally existent.
> Otherwise, it is absolutely existent.

The *Bhāṣya* considers this a definition of the two truths, conventional and absolute truth (*saṁvṛti-satya* and *paramârtha-satya*), and says that it is an innovation, the earlier understanding was different:

> According to the old masters, absolute truth is as grasped by supramundane knowledge and by the mundane knowledge acquired after that; conventional truth is as grasped by other [i.e. everyday mundane] knowledge.[5]

In the new definition by Vasubandhu, there are two types of conventional truth: 'The pot exists' and 'Water exists'. In the first case, its existence is conventional only, because "when the pot is broken into shards, it is not understood as a pot."[6]

We are interested in the second type, where the expression *anyâpoha* occurs.

> That also should be known as conventionally existent where if its other qualities are removed by the mind, it is not understood as that. E.g. water: for there if its qualities (its colour etc.) are removed by the mind, it is not understood as water.[7]

---

[5] *"Yathā lokôttarena jñānena gṛhyate, tat-pṛṣṭha-labdhena vā laukikena, tathā paramârtha-satyam; yathânyena, tathā saṁvṛti-satyam", iti pūrvâcāryāḥ.*

[6] *…yathā ghaṭaḥ; tatra hi kapālaśo bhinne ghaṭa-buddhir na bhavati.*

[7] *Yatra cânyān apohya dharmān buddhyā tad-buddhir na bhavati, tac câpi saṁvṛti-sad veditavyam. Tad yathâmbu: tatra hi buddhyā rūpâdīn dharmān apohyâmbu-buddhir na bhavati.*

The text itself is straightforward, but the meaning is far from clear. What is the significant difference between a pot and water? Maybe that water as a liquid cannot be broken? Probably not, as the examples to absolute truth suggest:

> Absolutely existent is that where if it is broken it is still understood as that; also when its other qualities are removed by the mind. E.g. matter:[8] for there if a thing is broken into atoms and its qualities (its taste etc.) are removed by the mind, the essence (*svabhāva*) of matter is still understood. Sensation (*vedanā*) etc. should also be considered so.[9]

Therefore, it seems that the relevant feature of water is not that it is liquid but that it is a kind of material; all its smaller parts are still water. 'Gold' could have been used in its place but 'lake' not.

All this can be perhaps summed up so: all compound entities are only "conventionally" real, whether they are made up of physical parts or of several qualities. Only unanalysable simples exist "absolutely", e.g. (tentatively) space, time, matter, *nirvāṇa*, sense data like red, or other basic perceptions like pain. The meaning of *anyâpoha* here is 'mentally removing the qualities' or 'abstraction from properties': this meaning is practically unrelated to its later philosophical use. That would be a real surprise! First occurrence of the word, and in the right context (for another term for conventionally existing is *prajñapti-sat*, '*nominally* existing') – and yet the meaning would be completely different.

However, it is not necessarily so. As is well known, the *Abhidharma-Kośa-Bhāṣya* is a unique case of reinterpretation, in that it is acknowledged in the tradition. The *Kośa* itself is supposed to present the teachings of the Vaibhāṣika school, while the *Bhāṣya* is written from the Sautrāntika viewpoint. (Rather surprisingly, in spite of this it is held to be an autocommentary.) In this situation, nothing speaks against testing the possibility of the *kārikā* having another meaning. In fact, the commentary's analysis of the second half-line, *anyâpohe dhiyā ca tat*, is rather implausible. In that sense we would expect something like *dharmâpoḍhe dhiyā na vā,* "or if [its] qualities have been removed by the mind it is not [cognised]". *Anya,* 'other' has no meaning in the text and *dharma,* 'quality' is clearly required. Joining the last word, *tat*, to the second line, where it is immediately followed by an illustration ("as the pot and water") belonging to the first line is again a little unnatural.

So I would propose a different translation that would accidentally be really important for the history of *apoha*-theories: "Where, if a thing is broken, it is no longer cognised as that; and it is that in its separation by the mind from other things / as water in a pot: it is conventionally existent. Otherwise it is absolutely existent." To explain, the second ground for considering an entity "conventionally" existent is that its distinctness is not objective, it is artificially constructed by the mind, by distinguishing it from other entities – like the water in the pot is not different from the water in the well, it is just externally delimited by the pot.

This interpretation has several advantages. It fits in nicely with later developments – both with Vasubandhu's Yogācāra works and with Diṅnāga's (and also Dharmakīrti's) *anyâpoha* theory. Also *saṁvṛti*, being originally but a mistranslation of Pāli *sammuti,* 'agreement, consensus, convention' (proper Sanskrit would be *sammati*), always carried with it a strong element of conceptuality. Its root was everyday naive human misconception of the world, lacking ultimate validity. This conceptuality is present in this translation, but it is lacking in the *Bhāṣya*'s version. Further, the simile of the water in the pot is quite helpful here, while in the commentary water was a singularly impenetrable example.

---

8 *Rūpa*. – 'Colour' seems less probable, but not impossible, here.

9 *[Y]atra bhinne 'pi tad-buddhir bhavaty eva, anya-dharmâpohe 'pi buddhyā, tat paramârtha-sat. Tad yathā rūpam: tatra hi paramâṇuśo bhinne vastuni, rasâ[dī]n api ca dharmān apohya buddhyā, rūpasya svabhāve buddhir bhavaty eva. Evaṁ vedanâdayo 'pi draṣṭavyāḥ.*

We can also discover a motive for this analysis of phenomenal reality: *saṁvr̥ti* in its natural sense 'surrounding' matches the action of the pot, while as 'warding off, keeping back', it is almost synonymous with *apoha,* 'driving away'. Therefore, this analysis also serves as a justification for the otherwise not very natural Sanskrit term, *saṁvr̥ti-satya,* 'covering truth'.

This understanding of conventional truth is not without a precedent either. According to the *Abhidharma-Hr̥daya*, "conventional knowledge […] is impure cognition grasping what is only conventionally true in terms of conceptual distinctions such as male/female, long/short, etc."[10]

In this light, the commentary's interpretation appears to be forced, caused by failing to grasp the real import of *anyâpoha*.[11] It is not very surprising, considering that Diṅnāga's far more detailed account was similarly not understood, as we will see later. It is a fertile concept, but quite unusual, not corresponding to our intuitions and therefore difficult to grasp.

A possible source of the *Bhāṣya* here could be Harivarman, who, while presupposing an analysis of conventional truth similar to Dharmaśrī's quoted above, writes on passing beyond it: "E.g., the notions of male and female are caused to cease by analyzing them into various sorts of hair, etc., and then those notions in turn are caused to cease through analysis into emptiness."[12]

I think that Diṅnāga's (ca. 540 CE) starting point was this stanza of Vasubandhu. This could be true even if the above hypothesis would turn out to be unacceptable. There is nothing inherently implausible in supposing that Diṅnāga did not know the *Bhāṣya,* or that he thought that (as belonging to another school) it needed not be followed in interpreting this *kārikā.* Therefore, he could have devised an interpretation similar to the one proposed here and built his theory upon it.

Diṅnāga's *apoha*-theory is about the meaning of words and complex expressions. It is explicitly presented as proving that verbal information (*śābda*) is not a separate, independent source of information but a special form of inference only[13] (and thereby clearly, although implicitly, rejecting the authority of the Vedas). His *apoha* means separation or difference; however, it is regularly translated as exclusion or negation. His more characteristic compound inherited from Vasubandhu, *anyâpoha* (meaning 'separation/distinguishing/difference from others') is usually interpreted as 'exclusion of others' or 'double negation'. A word's meaning is not a real universal: it denotes its objects indirectly only, by rejecting other objects. A cow is what is not a lion, a horse, a man etc.

In a sense, quite aptly he substantiates this position by *'anyâpoha',* rejecting other possible theories. With different arguments, he shows that the meaning of a word cannot be an individual, a set of individuals, a real universal, the relation of an individual to a universal or an individual characterised by a universal. He tries to show that *anyâpoha* is free from the errors of rival theories, while it can do everything that would be expected from a universal.[14]

---

[10] Charles Willemen summarizing (Bhadanta) Dharmaśrī's *Abhidharma-Hr̥daya* (or *-Sāra*) ch. 6 (Potter et al. 1996: 465).

[11] This could be a strong argument against the *Bhāṣya* being an autocommentary.

[12] Karl H. Potter summarizing Harivarman's *Tattvasiddhi* book 4, ch. 1 (Potter 1999: 297).

[13] The very first words of his treatment of *apoha* say, "Verbal knowledge is not a different source of information from inference. For it, like that, tells its meaning through distinguishing it from others (*anyâpoha*), as 'it is produced'" (in the standard example of inference proving the non-eternality of the word – a nicely chosen example). *Na pramāṇântaraṁ śābdam anumānāt. Tathā hi saḥ / kr̥takatvâdivat svârtham anyâpohena bhāṣate.* (*Pramāṇa-Samuccaya* 5.1.)

[14] "The qualities of a universal are firmly present in the 'rejection of others'" (*anya-niṣedhasya… jāti-dharma-vyavasthit[i]ḥ*, *Pramāṇa-Samuccaya* 5.36). The (auto?) commentary explains, "The qualities of a universal are defined as unity, eternality and completeness in each [individual]" (*jāti-dharmāś câik[a]tva-nityatva-pratyeka-parisamāpti-lakṣaṇā[ḥ]*).

Although this is a perfectly sound method of proposing a new theory, a more positive approach could have been helpful. Coupled with the extremely cryptic style of Diṅnāga,[15] it resulted in his theory perhaps never having been correctly understood by anyone. It seems that it was Uddyotakara (ca. 610 CE) who in his detailed criticism of Diṅnāga's theory hit upon the ever since standard misinterpretation of *anyâpoha* as double negation: "The meaning of the word 'cow' is: *not a non-cow*".[16] Small wander that he can easily triumph over this apparently idiotic theory. "While he does not understand *non-cow*, an understanding of *cow* is impossible. And also, while he does not understand *cow*, an understanding of *non-cow* is impossible. So neither will be understood!"[17] The idea is clear. As according to the supposed *apoha*-theory the meaning of 'cow' is 'not non-cow', to understand 'cow' we have to understand 'non-cow' first. It is also clear for anyone, that 'non-cow' is derived from 'cow', so first 'cow' has to be understood. This is an incorrigible circularity, although much of modern Diṅnāga scholarship tries to make some sense of it (usually trying to distinguish between the two negations involved in the double negation).

The *mīmāṁsaka* Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (ca. 640 CE) in the *Apoha* chapter of his *Śloka-Vārttika* further elaborated on Uddyotakara's criticism. He added some more arguments but retained the *Nyāya-Vārttika*'s interpretation of *apoha,* as even his example shows:

> Those, who construe the universal referent as 'not belonging to non-cow',
> clearly speak only of the real entity *cowness* under the terminology 'exclusion of non-cows'.[18]

In all probability, it was these criticisms that urged later Buddhists, in particular Dharmakīrti (ca. 640 CE) to look for a new interpretation of *apoha* as the meaning of the word – and they found it in 'a concept formed by the mind', in effect a nominal universal. This was again quite in harmony with Vasubandhu's original insight, *anyâpoho dhiyā*, "separation *by the mind* from other things". Why exactly it was called an *apoha* was no longer very clear, although some not too convincing attempts were later made to justify the terminology.

After Dharmakīrti, there arose different versions of the theory, differing in the ways they described the process of concept formation, and consequently in how far our concepts are removed from actual external reality. However, all these did not change the meaning of *apoha*, so these ramifications will not be discussed here.[19]

Summarily we may say that there were three fundamentally distinct senses of *apoha.* For Diṅnāga, it was 'difference from others'. For his non-Buddhist critics, it was 'double negation'. In later Buddhism, it was 'nominal (or conceptual) universal'. Unfortunately the neat separation of these

---

[15] For the modern scholar there are additional difficulties. His only extant text on the subject, the fifth chapter of his *Pramāṇa-Samuccaya,* 'Compendium of epistemology', survives only in fragments and quite problematic Tibetan translations.

[16] *"Gaur" iti padasyârtho "'gaur na bhavatî"ti.* (*Nyāya-vārttika* p. 686)

[17] *Yāvac c[â]gāṁ na pratipadyate, tāvad gavi pratipattir na yuktā; yāvac ca gāṁ na pratipadyate, tāvad agavîty ubhaya-pratipatty-abhāvaḥ.* (*Nyāya-vārttika* p. 686)

[18] *Ago-nivṛttiḥ sāmānyaṁ vācyaṁ yaiḥ parikalpitam,*
gotvaṁ vastv eva tair uktam ago-'poha-girā sphuṭam. (*Śloka-Vārttika, Apoha-vāda* 1)

[19] Dharmottara, at least as presented by Jayanta, typically uses *apoha* not for the nominal universal itself but for the perceptual image with the universal superimposed on it.

meanings is not acknowledged in the tradition, probably most authors are not even aware of it, and in consequence these different meanings can be found sometimes even in the same text.[20]

Both the double negation theory and the different Buddhist theories of nominal universals have been extensively studied in the scholarly literature. On the other hand, the fact that Diṅnāga's *anyâpoha* was no double negation at all remained unnoticed and therefore its philosophical implications were not sufficiently treated. In the remaining part of this chapter, I will try to show that this theory is not only defensible, but in fact, it is correct and has great explanatory power. For obvious reasons (it would require a sizeable volume) no philological proof can be attempted here; I can only say that this interpretation is consistent with everything I know of Diṅnāga's thought.

3. Negation, contrast, dissociation

Although it seems remarkably crazy to say that the meaning of 'cow' is that it is not a non-cow still in a sense it is true – a cow is not a non-cow. It is an expression of a law in classical logic: double negation is affirmation. It is also part of the Sanskrit language where double negation expresses a very emphatic statement, e.g. *Na so 'brāhmaṇaḥ* means, "He is a Brahmin indeed!"

The law of double negation may be a tautology, but it can be useful as an argument against real universals. No one thinks that any possible or expressible predicate is a real universal: e.g., 'seven-legged winged hippopotamus' has a clear meaning, but it is not a (real) universal. Not because there are no winged hippos with seven legs. 'Person with three teeth' is also not a real universal, because it is clearly arbitrary. Only natural kinds correspond to real universals, and they have normally simple names like 'horse'. Compound expressions, like those derived from a proper universal with a qualifier or through some operator, like 'swift horse' or 'some horses' do not denote real universals. For an Indian it is most clearly so if the operation is negation, because negation denotes nonexistence, unreality; so 'non-horse' is accepted by all parties as not referring to a real universal. *A fortiori,* 'not non-horse' cannot denote a real universal. However, it is equivalent to 'horse', so that cannot be a real universal either! *Q.e.d.*

This seems to be sophistry but it does point out a significant difficulty in realism – mere simplicity of expression is not a good criterion, for on that ground 'bull' would be a universal while 'male lion' not. Even many proper animal species, like the easily recognizable black eagle would not be a real universal; not to speak of the limbless skink (a lizard without legs), which is characterised by an absence, a negation.

When we can name the 'other' in *anyâpoha*, then the negation understood in *apoha* will become quite sensible. If somebody does not know what a horse is, she might be told: "Go to the stable and see! The big animal which is not a cow is a horse". As there are only two kinds of large animal in this stable, cows and horses, we could specify 'non-horse' as 'cow'.

This kind of situation might be somewhat rare, but in other cases, negation of the 'other' can be a very natural form of giving the meaning of a word. The meaning of 'short' is not long, and the meaning of 'darkness' is absence of light. It is quite frequent when children learn the language and the world at the same time: "That is not a horse, it is a donkey", or "She is not fat, she has a baby in her

[20] "[A]poha qua ingenious double negation is only at most a limited part of Dharmakīrti's account… from Dharmakīrti and his commentators on, apoha theory expands its concerns, all the while taking on considerable hybridness due to holdovers from previous authors." (Tillemans 2011: 59)

tummy". We may notice in passing that in these examples the negation is pointing out the contrast or *difference*, thereby suggesting the right direction for a correct understanding of *anyâpoha.*

According to Diṅnāga, verbal knowledge is but a form of inference. This is a very complex issue, and he focuses on only the most basic element of it, the meaning of the word in isolation. When somebody says, "Tiger!" we know there is a tiger even without seeing it. Many related interesting points have to be left out of consideration, like the reliability of the speaker (she might be joking), the specification of the context (she may be watching National Geography Channel), secondary meanings (a toy animal) and fiction (reading The Jungle Book).

When I see smoke and infer that there is fire, it is exactly analogous to when I hear "Fire!", and infer that there is fire. So Diṅnāga's famous three conditions for the validity of an inference (*hetu-trairūpya*) must hold in both cases. The first is somewhat trivial and uninteresting here: the inference works only if there is really smoke (not e.g. mist), and if the cry was really 'fire', not e.g. 'wire'.

The other two conditions specify that there must be a real connection (of the right kind) generally between smoke and fire, or between the word 'fire' and fire. We would be inclined to give these two conditions as one: smoke occurs only when there is fire; or 'fire' is uttered only when there is fire (remember, we disregard here lies and stories, etc.). Diṅnāga, with good reason, separates this in two, association and non-dissociation (*anvaya* and *vyatireka*).[21] Association is somewhat obvious: we often find smoke where there is fire, and we often hear 'fire' in the presence of fire.[22] Without such association, we will not make the connection. I have never seen sand burning so I will not think on seeing a patch of sand that there must be some fire here. I have never heard fire being called a sword so on hearing the word 'sword' I will not presume that there must be fire around.

The third condition, non-dissociation is the rigorous one, and also the non-trivial part of the analysis. Smoke does not occur without fire, and 'fire' is not uttered unless some fire is nearby. Fuel, fireplace, pot and stew are often found near a fire, so association is possible; but they are also found dissociated, without fire, so we cannot infer from a pot that there must be some fire. Similarly, although we frequently hear 'evening', 'cook', 'dinner' or 'hot' in the presence of fire, but we also hear these words without any fire, so we will not think that they mean fire.

The first condition is connected to a single case of reasoning (I see smoke coming out of the chimney of this house) or understanding a particular utterance (my alarmed neighbour crying "Fire!"). The other two conditions are about finding out the lawlike relation between smoke and fire or learning the meaning of the word 'fire'. Now in order to notice the lawlike connection between fire and smoke I must first know what fire and smoke is. Analogously in order to learn the meaning of the word 'fire' I must first know what fire and 'fire' is. The second presupposes quite a lot of linguistic competence, first of all a good grasp of the phonemes of the language. The first presupposes that I have already an idea of what fire is, without knowing its name, as animals do.

Clearly it was the third condition that Diṅnāga referred to in *Pramāṇa-Samuccaya* 5.1 (quoted above, fn. 13) as *anyâpoha*, and therefore it could also be translated there as 'dissociation from others'.[23] A word like 'fire' expresses its meaning through dissociation from others, "non-fires": i.e.

---

[21] This separation is of course present already in the *Nyāya-Sūtra* 1.1.34–37*,* in the two kinds of *dṛṣṭānta,* 'example', i.e. parallel example (in the kitchen: there is both fire and smoke) and example for the contrapositive (on the lake: there is no fire and no smoke).

[22] It is important to notice that there is no constant co-occurrence: some fires do not smoke, and it is not the case that near a fire a continuous "fire-fire-fire" is heard. The *ability* (possibility, disposition) is constant: all fires can smoke (if we add a little wet fuel) and all fires can be called 'fire'.

[23] 'Dissociation from others', i.e. 'dissociation from non-F' is equivalent to 'non-dissociation from F'.

through never occurring without fire. Interestingly enough, this *anyâpoha* is not about *what* universals are. It is about how we connect two kinds of universals, objective universals like fire with linguistic universals like the word 'fire'. Acquaintance with these universals, fire and 'fire' is simply presupposed here.

4. Omnis determinatio est negatio

In spite of all that was said so far, there is an inherent implausibility in *anyâpoha* as a theory of meaning. 'Short' may be explained as 'not long', but what does 'long' mean? If the answer is, 'not short', we have a circularity of the bad kind. So even if some (or perhaps many) words can be analysed with negation, such an analysis always presupposes that the contrary term is not defined this way. So at least half of the vocabulary cannot be defined through *anyâpoha.* A theory that cannot account for the meaning of a large and basic set of words is surely not very satisfactory.

In order to show that this implausibility is only apparent let me introduce an extremely simplified model of the world and human cognition. In this model, everything is globular. There are huge sentient beings called globes, and smaller insentient things called balls. Globes feed on balls, but greater balls (called by them 'rubbish') could choke them. Luckily, they have a single sense organ, a sieve with 1 cm wide holes in it, and they eat the balls that fall through this, called 'food'. Clearly, they identify food by rejecting (*apoha*) rubbish – and they can define 'rubbish' as 'non-food'. Still, there is no circularity! Because circularity does not work, but our globes do survive...

The secret is in the sieve that lets through food but rejects rubbish; it separates the two kinds of balls, it distinguishes them. Therefore, *apoha* is rejection or negation only in a secondary sense: fundamentally, it is differentiating. To know the meaning of 'food' is to know how to distinguish it from rubbish, i.e. to know that you have to use the sieve to separate food from non-food. The sieve supplies the difference between food and rubbish; it gives the limit of food.

In this model, is food a real universal, or nominal only? If there are only two kinds of balls in the world, small balls with 0.5 cm diameter and large balls 2 cm in size, they are objective, natural kinds, quite independently of whether there are globes to feed on them or not. The names, food and rubbish, may reflect "global" interests, but there is nothing subjective or arbitrary in the distinction: so they are real universals.

What if the balls can have any size? There are no two natural kinds here, only one kind with variable size. Is food a nominal (or conceptual) universal? Not really: concepts do not kill, but consuming a ball larger than 1 cm will choke a globe! Furthermore, size is an objective feature of the world, although the 1 cm limit is relevant only to the globes. So we can say that in this case the universal 'food' is still real, but "globe-centric".

What could a nominal universal be in this model? Perhaps if the balls had unique numeric identifiers transmitted via radio waves that the globes could sense, they could agree to call balls no. 17, 23, 29 and 31 'brownies' – that would be a "name only", an arbitrary name, a concept not matching any real distinction in the external world. This suggests that a purely "nominal" or "conceptual" universal *sensu stricto* is an absurdity.[24]

[24] This is what Siderits described as the impossibility of eliminativism about universals. "Reductionist and eliminativist about *K*s agree that in believing there are *K*s we commit a kind of error: our belief does not reflect the ultimate truth. What they disagree about is what sort of error this is. The reductionist holds it to be a useful error for creatures like us, while the eliminativist sees it as at best useless if not positively harmful. It should now be clear why I think that the apoha theory is a

This result matches our intuitions about our world. Universals are real – facts of the world as much as particulars, not human conventions at all. Those zebras that could not distinguish a lion from a non-lion are extinct; or with the Indian example 'cow', a bull that cannot distinguish a cow from a non-cow dies without offspring. Even cultural universals are objective: an employee that cannot distinguish a boss from a non-boss loses his job. (It is "conceptual", but these are social concepts, not private; so it is more fruitful to call them social universals.) Universals are not social and biological only, they are facts of the inanimate world as well. Wood will float on water, stone will not; iron will rust, gold will not.

The above model perhaps matches well the case of pairs of opposites, like short and long, darkness and light, where at the very start it was somewhat plausible to accept the *apoha* theory. However, it does not seem to do justice to universals like tiger, where we probably cannot have a ready-made filter tiger/non-tiger. Here our intuition would expect positive characterisations, real content, not mere negativity, something like "a large carnivorous mammal like a huge cat with yellow body and black stripes".

Let us make the model just a little more complex. A ball larger than 2 cm will not fit into a globe's mouth, and between 1 and 2 cm, it will suffocate the globe if consumed. Between 0.5 and 1 cm, it is digestible, between 7 and 8 mm even highly nutritional. A ball between 1 and 5 mm can harm the nice internal mechanism of a globe, while below 1 mm it will have no effect at all. Not surprisingly in this world the globes have evolved a set of sieves situated below each other, with holes 20, 10, 8, 7, 5 and 1 mm in diameter respectively. They will have some straightforward words like 'rubbish' for the greatest balls and 'food' for those between 5 and 10 mm. Within food, they distinguish 'delicacy' (7–8 mm) and 'junk food' (5–7 and 8–10 mm). Both balls between 1 and 2 cm and between 1 and 5 mm are called 'poison', as they could kill a globe.[25] Lastly, balls below 1 mm are called 'imperceptibles' (until the advance of modern science they were but a speculation of globe philosophers).

What would be a natural definition of junk food here? Food that is not a delicacy, a non-delicacy. And food is an ingestible that is not a poison, a non-poison. Ingestible is a perceptible that is not rubbish, non-rubbish. Finally, perceptible is a ball that is not imperceptible. We have here a series of *apohas*, differences expressed as negations. The idea of junk food is fairly complex: a ball either greater than 5 mm and smaller than 7 mm, or greater than 8 mm and smaller than 10 mm – yet it could be best expressed by saying that it is non-delicacy. Of course, it works only if we presuppose that we are talking about food. A full definition without a given context would be: non-imperceptible and non-rubbish and non-poison and non-delicacy.

What is the point in preferring the *via negativa*? Why not say instead: perceptible, ingestible, food, with low nutritional value? It is clearly possible, just the negative formula emphasizes that we have to say at each step the *difference* between perceptible and imperceptible, rubbish and ingestible, food and poison, delicacy and junk food. Instead of the mystical *universal,* we have the fairly

kind of reductionism about universals. Indeed it is difficult to see how one might espouse eliminativism about universals. While nominalists hold that universals are not ultimately real, they must agree that our interests would not be served if we failed to treat individuals as belonging to kinds. Indeed the apoha theory turns on precisely the claim that it is our interests and cognitive limitations that explain our seeing particulars as belonging to kinds." (Siderits 2011: 299)

[25] Actually it is quite probable that evolution connected the outflow of some sieves: the balls rejected by the 1 cm and the 1 mm sieves go to the same pocket, resulting in the unanalysable perception of poison; and similarly, the outflow of the 5 and 8 mm sieves produce the direct perception of junk food. Perhaps only yogis can sense the difference between small poison and large poison, and now modern measuring instruments provide a clear analysis of the objective situation. – As this complication is irrelevant for understanding the basic situation it will not be pursued here further.

transparent *difference*, in effect a single test at every step – in our model embodied in a sieve (or at most a pair of sieves, a lower and an upper limit).

Such a hierarchical structure of classification is called a Porphyrian tree, and it is a good control of the adequacy of this reconstruction to Diṅnāga's theory. There is clear proof that Diṅnāga knew and accepted the Porphyrian tree as he gives an example of the structure in his treatise on *apoha*: knowable–existent–substance–solid–tree.[26] (Again quite aptly, the example for the Porphyrian tree is a tree.)

To summarize what we have found so far, Diṅnāga's *anyâpoha* theory is not about double negation, although at times double negation may be used to express it. It is about difference. It says that to know the meaning of cow is to know in what a cow differs from other things, how a cow differs from non-cows.[27] Normally, we need not expressly distinguish a cow from everything else in the universe but can start from an already known concept like 'animal'. That is only an appearance, because all of us have a huge arsenal of well-known concepts, so in giving definitions we start from an already known larger concept. However, those presupposed concepts also work only because we know their difference from others, e.g. we know in what an animal differs from plants, and in what a living being differs from inanimate substances.

This insight of Diṅnāga is not unique in the history of philosophy, although perhaps unduly neglected. Hegel's beloved slogan, *Omnis determinatio est negatio* ("Every determination is negation"), taken from Spinoza's *determinatio negatio est*, beautifully expresses the interrelation of definiteness, difference and negation. In fact this notion is present in the very words, de-termination and de-finition, *terminus* meaning 'end, limit' and *finis* 'boundary, end'.

Further back in antiquity, the roots of the Porphyrian tree can be found in the Aristotelian theory of concepts. According to Aristotle, in a proper definition of a concept (a species or εἶδος) we have to give first the next higher concept (genus proximum, γένος) and then the specific difference (differentia specifica, εἰδοποιὸς διαφορά) of the concept to be defined. In effect, a concept is defined by giving the difference from others (*anyâpoha*) within the same genus – this is just a small step from Diṅnāga's position, where a concept is nothing but its difference from others.

---

[26] *Vr̥kṣatva-pārthiva-dravya-saj-jñeyāḥ prātilomyataḥ*
catus-tri-dvy-eka-sandehe nimittam, niścaye 'nyathā. (*Pramāṇa-Samuccaya* 5.35.)

"Treeness, earthen, substance, existent, knowable: in reverse order, they cause four, three, two and one doubt; the other way, certainty." The text is about the interrelation of different concepts. If we know only that it is knowable, there are four "doubts", i.e. further tests to make: is it existent? If yes, is it a substance? Is it "earthen" (i.e. a solid substance)? Is it a tree? If we know that it is a substance, there are only two doubts; and there are two certainties – it must be an existent and also knowable.

[27] He expresses this most clearly in *Pramāṇa-Samuccaya* 5.11d–12:

… Tenânyâpoha-kr̥c chrutiḥ.

Bahudhâpy abhidheyasya na śabdāt sarvathā gatiḥ.
Sva-sambandhânurūpyāt tu vyavacchedârtha-kāry asau.

"… Therefore, the utterance causes the rejection (*apoha*) of others. The referent, even though it can be referred to in many ways, is not understood at all from the word. Instead, the word gives its meaning through separation (*vyavaccheda*) according to its own connection." *Sva-sambandhânurūpyāt,* "according to its own connection" probably means that e.g. the word 'cow' is specifically connected to separating cows from non-cows.

Very interestingly, the word *apoha* itself may be a literal translation of Greek διαφορά (difference).[28] The preverb δια has the meanings 'in different directions', 'asunder', 'leaving an interval or breach'; it is fairly close to Sanskrit *apa,* 'away (from)'. The second part is in both cases a noun derived from a verb meaning 'to carry', φέρω and *vah-*. At present, there is no way of telling whether this is mere coincidence or it is a reflex of strong Greek influence on the logic of Vasubandhu and Diṅnāga. In general it seems that the Buddhist logicians gave a clear formal-deductive turn to Indian logic and that would be easiest explained by the direct or indirect influence of Aristotelianism.

It is only fair to say that several modern scholars have noticed the 'difference' aspect of Diṅnāga's *anyâpoha*,[29] but they did not give it the weight it deserves – it is not an aspect of the theory, it is its very essence. Perhaps Hayes (1988: 211) emphasized it most clearly:

> The basic claim behind the apoha theory of meaning is simply that every symbol divides the universe into two and only two mutually exclusive classes, and from this it follows that a symbol marks the segregation (apoha) of the members of its own domain from the complementary class and that it marks the exclusion (apoha) of all contrary symbols from its own domain.

Although it seems that due to the hostile criticisms of non-Buddhist authors Diṅnāga's original theory was largely forgotten and misunderstood, still the idea of difference sometimes surfaces in Dharmakīrti's writings[30] and even after him, in the work of Dharmottara,[31] Śāntarakṣita[32] and Ratnakīrti[33] – or at least in their modern interpretations.

5. The power of the theory

Diṅnāga's *anyâpoha* theory does fulfil its promise. As a word does not connect directly to its referent, because the word's meaning merely gives the possible referents' characteristic difference from other kinds, there is no problem in the fact that words can refer to individuals, sets of individuals or universals. Hector is a dog, because he has all the features that distinguish dogs from foxes, cats and cows; and the same is true of the dogs of the village, all Labradors, or all dogs. The same can also be said about the universal 'dog', the generalised-abstract concept. In our model, we would use the same set of sieves (or, in the case of the universal, we would think about the same set of sieves).

---

[28] This could be the otherwise seemingly lacking motivation for the introduction of the new term *apoha.* For although several possible terms for such a concept, like *viśeṣa* or *bheda*, were heavily overused for other purposes, other, perhaps more natural options were at hand. Among them Diṅnāga actually uses *vyavaccheda*, *vyudāsa* and *niṣedha*.

[29] "Paraphrasing Diṅnāga's statement, we may say that the word functions as a limitation operator in that it delimits its own signified object from other signified objects by establishing a boundary between its own referent, tree, and its nonreferent, nontree." (Pind 2011: 75, almost verbatim from Pind 1999: 319.)

"Thus, the positive feature, cowness (*gotva*), can be dispensed with, because its purpose can be served very well by 'difference from noncows' (*a-go-vyāvṛtti*). The meaning of words consists in differentiation, and hence, it is negative in character." (Sen 2011: 172 speaking about *apoha* in general, not specifically of Diṅnāga.)

[30] "the emphasis, in the part of Dharmakīrti's answer [to the charge of circularity in *apoha*] found in PV I. 119d–121 and his prose autocommentary, resides in the notion of 'difference'." (Hugon 2011: 117.)

[31] [According to Dharmottara,] "since the existence of the object of a concept cannot be affirmed, it has as its intrinsic nature merely 'differentiation from others (nontrees),' that is, the 'negation (apoha) of others.'" (Hattori 2011: 142.)

[32] "Śāntarakṣita puts the point quite pithily: 'no affirmation without distinction' (*nānvayo 'vyatirekavān*) (TS 1020)." (Siderits 2011: fn.1 on p. 300.)

[33] "Ratnakīrti uses five different terms to denote the process of excluding: 'exclusion' (*apoha*), 'taking away' (*parihāra*), 'separating out' (*vyāvṛtti*), 'covering up' ([*para*]-*āvṛtta*), and 'absence' (*abhāva*). These terms are used synonymously. What these expressions suggest is that exclusion is the capacity of differentiating […]" (Patil 2011: fn. 31 on p. 167)

The theory meets the three requirements for a universal mentioned above, fn. 14. *Anyâpoha* is the exclusion or negation of "others"; we can paraphrase it as the absence (or non-being) of others. Of course, an absence is one and indivisible; it is unchanging, so eternal; and it is completely present in all the particulars: there is not a bit of a cat or cow in Hector, they are fully absent. Even without the somewhat magic use of the series negation–absence–non-being–nothing, we get the same results. We always use the same set of "sieves", so it is one and unchanging; and we have to use the whole set to identify even a single dog, so it is completely present in each individual. Or, with another illustration, if we have collected all the cattle in the corral, closing out horses, bears and dogs, the fence would be the *anyâpoha.* As long as the fence is in place (i.e., we do not change the meaning of the word), all cows and any cow would be within. The fence is one and unchanging, and each single cow is completely within it. Cows may change, grow old and die, calves may be born and even new breeds may appear but the corral is the same.

Anyâpoha also has a higher explanatory value about the relations of concepts and the combination of words. Real universals would be separate eternal entities, and as such, quite independent of each other, unable to combine. Then how could we explain the fact that "a dog is an animal" is *a priori* true? What does it mean that dog is a kind of an animal? Universals being indivisible, how is it possible that part of the meaning of 'dog' is animal? In the *apoha*-theory, the working of the Porphyrian tree is entirely clear. To get the concept of dog, I just add some further *differentia specifica* within 'animal', separating it into 'dog' and 'other animal'. In the model, to get the concept of 'junk food' I just add a pair of sieves (7 and 8 mm) within food (5–10 mm), separating 'junk food' from other, i.e. 'delicacy'. This is perfectly analogous to a modern set-theoretic model of the extensions of predicates, but it is a stronger theory as it works on intensions as well: the sieves can handle future and possible balls equally easily. As I derived the concept of dog from animal (or the concept of junk food from food), the *a priori* relation of the two concepts is self-evident.

Where the two concepts are not hierarchically ordered, their combination (like 'blue flower'[34]) is again most easily analysed by *anyâpoha.* With real universals, the relation of the adjective and the noun is far from clear; at most what can be said is that blueness and flowerness are both present in an individual. However, that cannot provide us with a proper concept of blue flower in general! Again, if we start from the set of flowers and the set of blue things, the combination would result in a huge set of anything blue and all flowers. With *anyâpoha,* the situation is clear: we just exclude from flower anything non-blue. In the sieve model, if we introduce the adjective 'small' (passing through the 8 mm sieve) to get the meaning of 'small poison', we just apply the 8 mm sieve to the balls called 'poison' (1–5 mm or 10–20 mm in size). Clearly, *apoha* works here exactly as before in the definition of simple concepts like 'food'.

Actually, here the advantage of the *apoha* theory can be shown even on the "double negation" understanding. Blue flower = not non-(blue flower); and 'non-(blue flower)' is but the joining of 'non-blue' and 'non-flower', or, more exactly, the union of the two sets. Without the negation-trick, we would need the less evident set-theoretical operation intersection.

There are many more strengths of the theory. It can elucidate several more or less tricky problems still debated by philosophers of language. How is it possible that although everybody's concepts are strictly private still we can successfully communicate? When a biologist and a child talk about a cow, are they talking about the same thing? With the advance of science, does a concept change – e.g. does

[34] Diṅnāga gives a fairly long treatment to the problem at *Pramāṇa-Samuccaya* 5.14–22, the example of *nīlôtpala*, "blue water-lily" (a species of water-lily, often rendered as blue lotus) mentioned in verse 15.

water mean something else today (H_2O) than in the middle ages? Do empty universals like unicorn have a meaning? How can a child learn the meaning of a word just by seeing two or three individuals?

Unfortunately, this is not the place to give the answers in full, but the way can be shown. First, we are all born with a large set of remarkably standard "sieves", e.g. the ability to distinguish colours. My concept of blue may be incorrigibly private and incomparable to that of others. Still, being shown some examples of blue and some of red, I will soon find the right (built-in) sieve that correctly separates those. The second and over-important factor is that many natural kinds are widely different from others, so we do not need to use a very specific test to identify them. If there are only 1 cm and 8 cm balls in the world, we can perfectly understand each other even if I use the 7 cm sieve to distinguish them while you use the 2 cm sieve. Similarly, a child quite innocent of the mysteries of ruminating will easily talk with a scientist about cows based on his vague knowledge of a cow's typical form and voice only. They use (largely) different tests to identify a cow, but as long as the natural kind picked is the same, they are talking about the same. This is because the *anyâpoha* does not give the full content of a concept, only its difference from others. The content can be very different; it can significantly change with learning or with the advance of science – still it can remain the same concept if the borders do not change. Again, empty universals are not a problem for an *apoha-vādin,* they behave exactly as everyday universals do. We can specify their characteristic difference from others; just we do not find an individual matching the description. In the above example, if we use the 2 cm and the 7 cm sieve together to define middle-sized balls, the test (and so the meaning) is clear, just there happen not to be any balls in that size range.

Finally, we may try to answer tentatively the question, what kind of universal Diṅnāga's *anyâpoha* is. It seems that it is neither a real universal nor a nominal universal in any traditional sense. Some universals are simply "out there", like gold or stars, quite irrespectively of human cognition. Others do have a particularly anthropocentric tinge, like *paśu,* 'domestic animal'. However, as *anyâpoha* they work exactly similarly – in order to understand them and use them correctly, we have to know their difference from others. Here meaning is not an object but a *rule*. We could perhaps call it a pragmatic or procedural universal; this fits well the linguistic and the epistemological situation.

However, it is also clear that *anyâpoha* is far from arbitrary and often reflects fully objective natural kinds, so it must have some ontological ground as well. Perhaps we could say that a universal is a lawlike feature of the world manifesting in spatiotemporally continuous phenomena, i.e. its particulars. Some are based on the most general laws of physics, like electron or oxygen molecule; others are based on very specific laws of a society, like slave or rupee. Some are strongly dependent on the human constitution, like red and sharp; others, like liquid or globular are completely independent of it. Nevertheless, as humans and even particular human societies are part of the world, we can keep the suggested definition, "lawlike feature of the world" in this very wide sense.

Even though Diṅnāga's *anyâpoha* is not a nominal universal but a radically new theory, it still fits perfectly all the ideological requirements of a Buddhist theory. In spite of doing all the work of a supposed real universal and even having its features like eternality, it is not an eternal *object* – epistemologically it is a rule, ontologically it is a law. In addition, as we saw, making the connection between a word and its referent is just a case of inference, so there is no place for a fully separate verbal cognition (*śabda-pramāṇa*), and therefore the Vedas can have no particular authority.[35]

---

[35] The theory is also perfectly fit for a Buddhist reductionism about individuals: they can be viewed as limited universals of their momentary phases (*sva-lakṣana*) and/or of their parts, ultimately their atoms.

XIII. Jayanta on the meaning of words

Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, the brilliant Kashmiri philosopher and poet wrote his monumental *Nyāya-Mañjarī*, Cluster of Blossoms of Nyāya around 900 CE in confinement.[1] Although technically it is a commentary on the *Nyāya-Sūtra*, it is largely an independent exposition and criticism of many views. Its longest section (570 pages in the Mysore edition, i.e. 40% of the whole work) is commenting on sūtras 7–8 on verbal authority. The question is of paramount importance ideologically, for it should provide for the authority of scripture; it also gives Jayanta an opportunity to discuss many questions of the philosophy of language and related metaphysical problems.

Among the philosophically most interesting passages is the section on the problem of universals, as part of the analysis of the meaning of words. In it, Jayanta gives a detailed criticism of the Buddhist nominalist theory or *apoha-vāda*, of which the first and highly original formulation by Diṅnāga (ca. 540 CE) was the subject of the previous chapter.

Jayanta presents a quasi-historical reconstruction of the vicissitudes of the *apoha* theory. His discussion is in four stages: early *apoha*; Kumārila Bhaṭṭa's (ca. 640 CE) refutation of it; Buddhist responses (by Dharmakīrti, ca. 640 CE and Dharmottara, ca. 800 CE); and his own criticism. He does not seem to know Diṅnāga's work directly; he probably bases the presentation of early *apoha* on Uddyotakara's and Kumārila's refutation of it. He seems to project back some of Dharmakīrti's theories onto it. Kumārila's *Śloka-Vārttika* he knows and understands very well, on certain points he gives a most helpful commentary on it. In the later phase of the *apoha* theory, he clearly distinguishes two interpretations. He mostly analyses Dharmottara's views, but sometimes in sharp contrast with another position, most probably that of Dharmakīrti.

The whole discussion is extremely interesting philosophically; it contains a wealth of often subtle arguments on the problem of universals, for and against both real and conceptual universals. It is also significant that he is clearly aware of three fundamentally different interpretations of the term *apoha*, and he is quite explicit about it.[2]

This chapter is also an essay in a new type of philosophical writing. While reading not too modern authors I have frequently felt that the best way to present their thoughts to a modern audience would be a retelling of their texts: keeping the ideas, the arguments and the order of exposition but changing the antiquated expression.

---

1 What we know of his life and works is excellently summarized by Dezső (2005: 15–19) in the introduction to his edition and translation of Jayanta's play *Much Ado About Religion.*

2 See the previous two chapters, especially pp. 122 and 129.

As it is well known, with Indian philosophical texts translation is something of an impossibility. Reliable translations are a great help to scholars reading the Sanskrit original but they are hardly accessible to a non-specialist. Frequently the solution picked is a good translation interspersed with a large amount of explanatory material. Here I try another approach, hopefully readable to non-Indologists and at the same time still useful for scholars in the field.

From now on, I will give to the best of my abilities Jayanta's train of thought, freely paraphrased, sometimes condensed, and sometimes a little expanded. Anything that is not unambiguously present in his text occurs in brackets; philosophical and some other comments are given in the footnotes. These might seem at times too categorical, at times even rude. Part of my apology for this is considerations of economy – there are simply too many of these remarks to surround each with the polite softening of tone that may otherwise seem desirable. More importantly, this way I express my sincere conviction that Jayanta is a philosopher with whom we can debate: his opinions are to be taken seriously, they need consideration and we have to answer them. This way I hope to have given them some of the weight they deserve.

All the titles are my addition, this time without brackets. The text followed is Kataoka's superb edition of this part of the *Nyāya-Mañjarī* (first part of the fifth *āhnika*, 'daily portion'). I have benefited immensely from Kataoka's introductions to his edition and from both the translations of its 2–3. part by Hideyo Ogawa and by Kataoka–Watson (2013), presented at the Apoha Workshop in Vienna, 2012.

Jayanta Bhaṭṭa speaks:

1. The problem: Can words reach their objects?

The purpose of this chapter is to refute the (Buddhist[3]) position according to which words cannot reach their objects, because the meaning of a word is not an external reality.

As the meaning of a sentence depends on the meaning of its words, first word-meanings will be investigated. Verbs will be dealt with in the chapter on sentences (not included here).

Declined words are of four kinds: words for species, substances, qualities and activities. (Only words for species will be considered here.)

The meaning of words for species, e.g. 'cow' is the individual only as delimited by the species, e.g. cowness. This is the Nyāya position called *tadvat,* 'having that' (i.e. "having the species": the word's meaning is the individual characterised by the universal).[4]

The *individual* is a substance, described by qualities like white, and the substratum of actions. The *shape* is the arrangement of the parts like dewlap (characteristic of the Indian cow). The *species* is the

---

[3] In this chapter 'Buddhist' always refers to the tradition of Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti, the Buddhist "logicians".

[4] So the meaning of 'cow' is "having cowness". The point here seems to be that instead of a noun, cow, we have an adjective. Now adjectives normally express qualities and they characterise individuals: John is tall, whereas 'human' is neither tall nor short. This way we get the unified, modern logical concept of a predicate. Any statement about an individual will be a predicate, whether it expresses its kind, type, state, property, quality, attribute, motion, action, position or relation. This is a radical modification of the Aristotelian schema of subject–predicate, now replaced by the duality individual–predicate (with a radical reinterpretation of the term 'predicate'). In effect, we could interpret the Naiyāyika position, *tadvat* as stating that a species is just a kind of predicate.

form[5] common to each and every single cow like Bessie. As the word 'cow' seems to refer to all the three (and the *Nyāya-Sūtra* 2.2.66 explicitly says so), it has to be discussed how it can be reduced to the *tadvat* position; but as it is a long story it will be taken up in the next chapter only (not included here). Right now, another problem will be addressed:

2. Buddhist criticism of real universals[6]

No proof possible for the real existence of universals

The meaning of the word cannot be "the individual characterised by the species" if there is no species. And (according to the Buddhists) there is no proof for the existence of species, so it is mere fiction like a hare's horn.

There cannot be *perceptual proof* for universals,[7] because sense perception can distinguish only momentary individuals independently of past or future. A universal could be grasped by considering similar cases and recognising the common feature in them; that would be a cognition dependent on several other cognitions. Direct sense perception is independent (of other cognitions, it depends only on its external object), so it is incapable of such synthetic knowledge connecting earlier and later cognitions. The conceptual understanding of the perception that normally follows it, by its very nature (of being a concept) cannot reach external reality. Therefore its content, the universal, cannot be absolute truth (i.e. mind-independent).

For the very same reason neither *inference* nor *verbal knowledge* can establish the external reality of universals – as both of them are inherently conceptual and as such they cannot grasp external reality.

How universals can still be useful for handling reality will be taken up later.

The incoherence of the concept 'universal'

(Even without proof the reality of universals cannot be accepted, not even as a hypothesis, as the idea is incoherent.)

If universals existed, they would be something different from individuals. However, their difference cannot be conceived like the difference of a plum and an apple. Also, they do not occur in different places, and the one never occurs without the other.

---

5 Form in the Aristotelian sense (as contrasted to matter giving individuality), all the general and essential features taken together, essence.

6 The general structure of this and the next section follows Diṅnāga: a longer refutation of possible realist positions followed by a brief statement of the *anyâpoha* theory. The details however differ markedly, especially in that *apoha* is presented as a conceptualist theory, which seems to be the innovation of Dharmakīrti.

7 Jayanta more or less follows the terminology of the author whose position he presents. So here he speaks of universals (*sāmānya*) instead of species (*jāti*). 'Universal' is a more general term, but the difference is not important here.

No relation possible between universals and individuals

(Even accepting this mysterious difference, the relation of individuals and universals will be problematic. The analysis of different Hindu schools is rejected.)

(a) The (Nyāya) theory that the species *"is present"* in the individual is impossible. If the universal would be present in its entirety in an individual, nothing would remain of it, so it could not be present in another individual. If only a part of the universal would be present in the individual, then the whole species 'cowness' would not be there, so how could it be known to be a cow? Moreover, universals are generally accepted to be partless.

(b) The Vaiśeṣika theory of *"inherence"* is self-contradictory, for inherence is defined as an "inseparable relation". And a relation is *per definitionem* between two things; but what is inseparable is not two but one only![8] The other two standard examples of inherence do not illuminate the problem. The relation between substances and qualities is similarly an impossibility, for there is no substratum without qualities that could enter into a relation with the qualities.[9] The relation between a whole and its parts does not meet the definition, for, as Kumārila Bhaṭṭa had shown, the parts can and do exist without the whole, e.g. before the parts are joined to make the whole.[10]

(c) Scholastics (Prābhākara Mīmāṁsakas) call the relation of species and individual *"a relation of form and its substrate"*. Here 'form' cannot mean colour or shape, for in that case some substances (e.g. wind) and all qualities and actions would lack a universal. So it means 'essence', and according to the definition given above[11] it is equivalent to species; while its substrate will clearly be the individual. Therefore, the explanation will be a tautology.[12] – Again, is this 'form' a quality of the thing, or another thing, or the thing itself? Not the first two, as a separate thing or a separate quality of the thing would be perceived.[13] But if it is the thing itself, the thing and its form (being the same, i.e. only one) cannot be in a relation. – Without explicitly pointing out the difference between this special relation and other types of relation like inherence or contact, it seems to be but a new name for an old idea.

The omnipresence of universals

(As a universal is one but seen everywhere in its individuals, it is supposed to be omnipresent.)

(a) If a universal is *literally omnipresent*, then Bessie the cow would be a horse, as horseness is present in it. The meanings of all words would be completely mixed up.

---

8 False. Left and right are inseparable but they are neither one nor the same.

9 False. A triangle is impossible without three angles, but the triangle is different from its angles, and of course, it is in a relation with each of them.

10 But the Vaiśeṣika definition demands only that *both* the relata must not occur independently! Inherence is not a symmetric relation. If A (e.g. a man) cannot occur without B (a head), but B does occur without A, then B is inherent in A, but A is not inherent in B. – In fact, the relation of a species and its individuals *is* inherence: the species is inherent in each of its individuals.

11 "The species is the form common to each and every single cow like Bessie", and footnote 5 thereto.

12 The criticism is not completely just. As the relation of a universal and its particulars is of a unique type, the *analogy* of form (in the sense of shape) and its substrate (the thing having that shape) can be considered quite helpful.

13 This argument is in fact against the existence of perceptible universals, not against the possibility of the relation.

(b) It could be said that Bessie has a specific *power to manifest* cowness, but has no power to manifest horseness.[14] This will not work, for if manifested, the indivisible and omnipresent cowness should appear as such: present everywhere, not only in cows. Like when a painting in a dark room is manifested by a lamp, the painting will not be seen in the lamp, but where it really is, on the wall.

(c) Again the universal cannot be omnipresent in the sense that it is *present in all its individuals*, but not in the place between them. For when a new individual is produced, a calf is born, how could the universal cowness suddenly appear there? It cannot enter the calf, for it is unmoving. Or even if it could enter, it would have to leave another cow without cowness – or it would split off, but then it would not be partless.

Kumārila's dual aspect theory

According to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, a real object is one, still it is *both different* (from all other objects) *and identical* (to the similar objects), both "belonging to" (a category) and separate. Its "belonging to" form is the universal; its separate form is the difference. Any cognition of a thing contains both these aspects. It is not an unconscious error: neither can be eliminated without the other disappearing also. Just these two aspects of a thing appear always without any contradiction.

This theory hardly needs refutation, as it is admittedly self-contradictory, like the logic of the Jainas.[15] In fact, as it was said earlier, perception cannot grasp the common feature of several objects, for it grasps only one object – the similar objects can be added only by the mind. Of course the dual aspect of an object, its individuality and its belonging to a universal, is a fact – but that needs to be analysed and not just accepted as given in perception.

The Advaita Vedānta position that perception grasps only the identical (i.e. the highest universal, being) is similarly untenable. (It was shown in the preceding paragraph that perception cannot grasp the common feature of several objects.)

3. The Buddhist theory: causally determined nominal universals

Therefore, without real universals, the ground for using the same word to refer to different individuals is a concept only, i.e. a nominal universal.

Actually even (most Indian) realists accept that some words have no corresponding real universal, because they hold that universals include individuals only, never universals. Therefore, second-order predicates are not real universals, e.g. the word 'universal' itself is not a real universal, for it cannot be said of any individual. In such cases, the inclusion of universals under a single concept is said to be based not on their essence but on an external relation.[16] Both cowness and horseness are universals as they have the power to include many individuals: so their being universals is based on their relation to external things, the individual cows or horses.

---

[14] Interestingly (perhaps because this is in fact his preferred view) Jayanta does not bring up the obvious objection: in this case this "power to manifest cowness" would be the effective universal; and since this power is admitted by the argument to be present only in cows, so the original position has been given up.

[15] The persistent horror of the analytic mind from the rotating wheel: it moves yet it stays in the same place...

[16] *Upādhi*, literally 'placing near' or 'addition' is a concept similar to the Aristotelian accidental (property). It may be a relational property like "on top of a mountain" or "father of two daughters" or a changeable condition like "wet".

Obviously, this theory could be applied to all universals. Bessie's being a cow can be explained as based on an external relation: she can do a cow's work, e.g. give milk, say moo or show a cow's form. In other words, different individuals are considered to belong to the same universal if they have the same causal properties.[17]

Their effects are actually not identical; they are similar only. This similarity results in the judgement (immediately following the perception) that they are the same. Thus Bessie and Elsie are both cows, because their similar causal properties (including of course the similar sense-impressions they generate in us) lead to our judgement that they belong to the same category cow. So cowness depends on our judgement, it is a concept, not a real entity: it is a nominal universal. It is related to its individuals only through a complicated external relation.

The relation of concept and things: anyâpoha

There is a serious problem here. If universals are mere concepts, they cannot be connected to all their individuals, for a concept can be connected only to something known. As there are infinite individuals belonging to a universal, it is impossible to know them all. This would make both inference and verbal knowledge impossible. (When I see smoke somewhere, I would not know that this phenomenon belongs to the category 'smoke', as my concept 'smoke' was built upon other instances of smoke perceived earlier; and so I cannot infer that there must be some fire nearby. Again if somebody who has seen only other cows, not the ones I have seen, tells me, "There is a cow", I would not understand him, for my concept of cow is unrelated to this individual.)

The answer to the problem is in two steps. First, both inference and words work with concepts only, so they need not have any direct relation to external individuals. The crucial step is the second: a concept can be applied to a previously unknown individual, for it works by excluding things with forms different from that seen in the individuals already known. This is *anyâpoha*, 'exclusion of different ones'. (I see a horse: its form – in the wide Aristotelian sense – is clearly different from the forms of the cows I have so far seen, so I think it is not a cow. I see a new cow: its form does not seem to be different from the familiar cow-form of Bessie and Elsie, so I decide it is another cow.)

This way concepts are practically useful *without actually reaching external reality*. It is only perception that can do that; anything that belongs to the external objects is grasped by perception. There is no hidden information about the object, some information that was not perceived yet conceptual investigation could find.[18] Concepts only exclude mistaken identifications (i.e. inclusion in another concept); just like when I think of some mother of pearl in the sand that it is a silver coin, further investigation will show that it is not. (If a concept would reach its object, then my first idea of 'silver coin' was not a concept – or did the shiny thing in the sand change?)

As (Dharmakīrti) said, concepts cannot grasp the invisible essence of the thing, the substrate of all its properties, for such a real thing is never perceived – all we find is the conjunction of the properties,

---

[17] Interestingly the Buddhist position here comes remarkably close to my suggestion in chapter XII that "a universal is a lawlike feature of the world". For the causal properties are dispositional: 'a cow gives milk' does not mean that milk is flowing out of its udders right now, rather that under certain circumstances (e.g. it has a calf and it is being milked) it typically happens. Therefore, it is a lawlike feature of the cow, not a directly perceptible quality. – Actually even perceptible qualities are dispositional. A cow is red if it will be seen as red by an average human observing it in daylight.

[18] This is uncompromising empiricism.

nothing beyond it.[19] However, these properties and their being together are already given in the perception.

4. Kumārila's arguments against apoha[20]

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (in his *Mīmāṁsā-Śloka-Vārttika*) gave quite a number of refutations to the *apoha* theory.

Negative characterisations need an independently identifiable subject

Apoha means exclusion, and that is non-being (a negative entity or absence). A non-being cannot be understood independently, it needs a subject. ('Cow' can be said of a cow, no other subject is needed. With 'not a cow', we have to ask – *what* is it that is not a cow?)[21] However, there is no possible subject for the *apoha*.

The momentary external particulars (Bessie at this very moment) cannot be this subject, as they are grasped by perception only, not by conceptual thought (and *apoha* as the meaning of words and the content of concepts belongs to the conceptual sphere).[22]

(The individuals of everyday talk like Bessie are themselves universals for the Buddhist, being but series of momentary particulars.) Such intermediate universals as Bessie-ness cannot be this subject: for themselves universals, they are also *apoha*s, i.e. non-beings; and a non-being cannot be the subject of another non-being.[23] We need a positive subject. – But even if we accepted this possibility, the result would be false. For the universal Bessie would be the subject of 'the exclusion of non-Bessie', and not the subject of 'the exclusion of non-cow'.[24]

[19] And this is substance-reductionism: a substance is nothing but the sum total of its qualities. A frightening yet attractive position.

[20] Kumārila understands *anyâpoha* as double negation. As such, it is circular, and he mentions this fact several times. His main effort, however, is directed at showing that the theory is incoherent, which it is not. It might be tautological or empty, but clearly, there is no contradiction in saying that a cow is not a non-cow – it is simply true. No wonder that most of his arguments will be faulty or proving nothing unacceptable to an *apoha*-theorist.

It is possible that Jayanta also realised this, as the ironical tone of his introductory sentence may suggest: "Has not Bhaṭṭa emitted a mighty spoiling rain on the position that the meaning of words is apoha?" The hint at urination is unmistakable.

[21] This position is far from convincing. 'Impolite' needs a subject no more than 'polite' does. When I say, "this is not a cow", normally there is another animal present, e.g. a buffalo; and when I say, "this is a cow", normally there is an animal present, a cow. – The misunderstanding stems from the rather frequent mistake of not distinguishing the copulative and existential sense of the verb 'to be', i.e. 'is such-and-such' and 'there is'. In the existential sense, non-being is about nonexistence, 'nothing'; in the copulative sense, 'not being such-and-such', it is about difference. This is closely related to the general misinterpretation of Diṅnāga's *apoha,* 'difference' as 'negation'.

[22] This argument has nothing to do with *apoha*'s negativity. It only says that a perceptual object cannot be the subject of a conceptual universal. Whether it is convincing or not depends on the exact meaning we attribute to 'subject', but no precise meaning is given here.

[23] Why not? An unintelligent person can be impolite.

[24] Wrong. A subject does not normally exhaust the predicate: Bessie is a cow, but Elsie is also a cow. The argument would work only against the rather implausible proposition that "Bessie is the *only* subject of cow".

Lastly, the set of all cow-particulars cannot be this subject. For a set is nothing but all its members; and as it has innumerable members, they cannot be given (without presupposing an understanding of 'cow', but then the explanation would become circular).[25]

So the subject of 'absence of non-cows' must be something that is common to all cows but can be found in each cow-individual completely – and that is nothing but cowness![26] However, if we already have cowness, there is absolutely no place for the complication 'rejection of non-cows'.

The complementary set cannot be effectively given

If the 'exclusion of others' is to be meaningful, the 'others' must be somehow given. However, the class of 'non-cows' cannot be given (without reference to cows). Explicit enumeration is impossible, as it has infinite elements. It is also impossible to give the subsets of non-cows like horses etc.: their number is again infinite; and they are themselves defined by differentiating from of others, so we would have an infinite regress here. Thus, the exclusion of unspecified things cannot be the object of conceptual thought – and without concepts, no human activity is possible.

All apohas will be synonyms

All words expressing different universals like cow and horse, and those expressing individuals like Bessie and Misty (these are also universals of the momentary particulars according to the Buddhist) – all of them express exclusion, and so they are all synonyms.[27]

There cannot be different exclusions, for *apoha* is not an external reality that could be divided. This is not the case with real universals, for they are positive, and so they have distinct essences; but exclusions are all identical, as they are merely non-beings.[28]

The exclusions cannot be different according to their referents like Misty etc. (for horses), Bessie etc. (for cows) – for these are not referents at all (being themselves universals). And if the true referents, the momentary particulars were the ground of difference, then the exclusions would be different for each particular – and so exclusion could not do the job of the universal.[29]

The exclusions cannot be different according to what is excluded by them,[30] because:

---

[25] Of course, the position here rejected is the correct one: the subject, i.e. the extension of the predicate 'cow' is the set of all particular cows. We do not need to enumerate explicitly all its members in advance in order to be able to use the word 'cow', we only need to understand its meaning. And the situation does not change with negation – if I see a dugong and say, "This is not a seal", I do not have to know that it is a dugong, nor do I have to know personally all the seals of the world.

[26] According to Diṅnāga, that is exactly *anyâpoha,* the characteristic difference of cows from other species: Bessie has this difference from horses etc. completely, as all other cows have it. Kumārila's trick was to demand a "subject", i.e. another, unrelated specification for *apoha.* However, very few concepts can be defined in two completely independent ways.

[27] 'The exclusion of A' is synonymous with 'the exclusion of B' as they are both exclusions – it is about as convincing as to say that 'red fox' and 'Red Sea' are synonyms, both being red.

[28] It is hard to believe, but "Kumārila" pretends not to see the difference between being without water and being without toothpicks in the desert – both of them are just nonentities!

[29] This is a correct argument – rejecting a position that perhaps no one ever held.

[30] This would be the natural answer to the problem.

(a) The difference would be secondary only, the primary meaning of 'exclusion' being the same, they would still be synonyms.[31]

(b) How could a difference be made by the rejected things, being far away, totally external and unrelated – when it cannot be made even by the referents, where the connection would be plausible?[32]

(c) And in fact, what is excluded (by different concepts) is not different. 'Cow' is the exclusion of non-cows. What is a non-cow? Lion, elephant, dog etc. And what is a non-horse? Lion, elephant, dog etc. The two lists are exactly the same, except that the first includes also horse, the second includes cow. Such an overwhelming identity clearly overrules the insignificant difference.[33] Nor can the different element of the lists be claimed the important element, for then 'cow' would be the 'exclusion of horse' – and then even a lion would be a cow! (As a lion is also excluded from 'horse'.)

(d) What is excluded cannot be given in any acceptable way.[34] There are infinite elements of the class, so they cannot be enumerated; and there is no criterion for grouping them, as non-cows like horses etc. are not in the same place, nor at the same time. The criterion cannot be that they are not cows, for it presupposes the concept 'cow' and we have a circularity. Of course, some cow-particulars may be known without presupposing the concept 'cow', but that does not help, because language does not operate with particulars (so they cannot be negated).[35]

The iteration of apohas

A part of the 'exclusion of non-cows' is the 'exclusion of horses'. Here individual horses cannot be meant, as their number is infinite[36] and because individuals cannot be expressed by words.[37] Therefore the universal 'horse' is meant, and that is again an exclusion (the exclusion of non-horses), i.e. a non-being. If the non-being of a non-being has any meaning, then by the law of double negation it will be a positive statement![38]

In the 'exclusion of horses', 'horse' is again an exclusion (of non-horses). Are these two exclusions, i.e. non-beings the same or different? If they are different, then one is non-being, the other

---

[31] As much as a crocodile's head and a horse's head are synonyms, both being primarily heads.

[32] The answer is: John and Paul are peacefully sitting in a pub, and John is arrested – he blew up a bridge two years ago in a far-away country. The difference is made by a distant and nonexistent (no longer existing) bridge, not by John's and Paul's present similar behaviour.

[33] Sounds convincing, but... If I go on a fishing excursion and have the tent, the boat, the fishing rod, proper clothing, food, etc. etc., but I forgot the tiny hook, that makes all the difference.

[34] This is but a repetition and a little elaboration of the previous subsection, *The complementary set cannot be effectively given*.

[35] This somewhat compressed argument seems to mean that before negation, we would first need to generalize those particular cow-impressions – and that generalization would be the cow universal; having that, why bother with *anyâpoha*?

[36] A strong fence can exclude individual bears from the ranch, although the number of bears is practically infinite.

[37] False. A word's meaning is not an individual, but words can refer to individuals, like 'the neighbour's dog' or 'all dogs'

[38] True, the two exclusions can be deleted, but the result will be unproblematic for the *apoha* position. The result is that the cow is not a horse:
cow = exclusion of non-cow = exclusion of horse etc. = exclusion of (exclusion of non-horse) etc. = non-horse etc.

Of course, there is nothing particularly positive in a non-horse. Furthermore, the *apoha*-theorists do not typically say that the meaning of a word is negative – they say that it is not a real external entity.

must be being (and so will not be an exclusion, so the *apoha*-theory is given up). If they are the same, then (the exclusion of non-horses etc., i.e.) non-cow will be the same as the exclusion of non-cow![39]

The coreferentiality of two apohas

In such expressions as ‘blue flower’, the relation of the two words is qualifier–qualified, or coreferentiality; but this is impossible on the *apoha*-theory. For no two exclusions can *be present* in one *object* – because (a) there is no object of the right kind: a momentary particular cannot be the object of a word,[40] and there is no other (real external entity for the Buddhist).[41] Also (b) “being present in” an object is an impossibility (for exclusion is non-being, an absence, not a presence).[42]

Special difficulties with certain words

‘Existent’ and ‘knowable’ should be understood as ‘exclusion of nonexistents’ and ‘exclusion of unknowables’ – but there is nothing that is nonexistent, and we cannot know of anything unknowable![43] It is not an answer that here the excluded is just an imaginary entity, for by being imagined it already exists (as an imagination) and it is also known.[44]

‘Exclusion’ is not non-exclusion. But what is non-exclusion,[45] and how is it that it is not? And if it is not, everything will be meaningless![46]

Clearly *apoha* will not work with words like ‘not’, particles, conjunctives, etc., and probably also not with finite verbs. Of course, the theory was proposed as a substitute for real universals, i.e. the meaning of nouns only. Nevertheless, if these other words have other kinds of reference (whether an external reality, or a cognitive feature, or nothing at all), that should also be sufficient for nouns expressing natural kinds. Alternatively, as (Diṅnāga) thinks that the meaning of a sentence is ‘intuition’, it could be the meaning of words as well.[47]

---

[39] An empty verbal trick, reminding one of the worst lapses of Nāgārjuna. A similar argument: Is the child’s head the same as the crocodile’s or different? If the same, the child will bite off my arm. If different, the child has no head. – This paragraph is but a repetition of the earlier synonymy argument in a somewhat different garb.

[40] Misuse of the vagueness of *artha* (‘object’; here it can be either meaning or referent). A momentary particular cannot be the meaning of a word, but it can be the word’s referent. – Clearly, food can be both unsalted and not hot at the same time.

[41] So far, the argument is unrelated to the *apoha*-theory: it is about the general Buddhist ontology.

[42] Verbal trick. There *is* darkness in the room, although darkness is but the *absence* of light.

[43] Verbal trick. In fact, we can say that nobody is excluded (meaning ‘everybody may come’). ‘Nonexistent’ and ‘unknowable’ are (in this analysis) just empty classes like ‘unicorn’, or perhaps necessarily empty classes like ‘unmarried husband’.

[44] This point has an uncanny resemblance to St. Anselm’s ontological argument, where God exists at least in the mind of the atheist as soon as he understands the definition.

[45] Obviously: inclusion. And yes, exclusion is non-inclusion.

[46] This seems to be the silliest verbal play of all. Misconstruing the sentence, “Exclusion is not non-exclusion” into “Exclusion is not”, i.e. there is no exclusion, Jayanta (“Kumārila”) derives the conclusion: as the meaning of a word would be the exclusion of others, but there is no exclusion, so words have no meaning.

[47] The suggestions of this paragraph are strongly counter-intuitive. Probably nobody expects that the meanings of different categories of the language will fit a single description.

5. Buddhist rejoinder and psychological reinterpretation[48]

The answer to all these objections is that they are based on a total misunderstanding of the Buddhist position. They suppose that exclusion, *apoha* is essentially the non-being or absence of external things; but according to the Buddhist consensus, *apoha*[49] is a kind of cognition (so not an absence), dealing with internal phenomena.[50]

If it is a cognition of the meaning of a word, and its object is also a part of cognition,[51] why is it called *apoha*?

(Dharmottara's answer: To be more precise,) the situation is different. *Apoha* is neither internal nor external; it is neither cognition nor its object. As such, it cannot be said to exist absolutely – it is false and construed. It is some superimposed image[52] only, which colours the concept. It is a mere shadow of the perceived external object, for that is completely separate, unavailable for concepts. As the concept does not grasp the separate entity, we say that its object is separation (i.e. *apoha*).

(Physical) separation and the separated cannot occur one without the other; but here 'separation' is not absolutely true, it is only some superimposed image. If the actual impression of a normal person were that he perceives the (external object as) separated, in that case he would simultaneously notice three things: the separated object, what separates it, and from what it is separated. Of course, it is not the case.

In addition, the concept of a cow arising after seeing it presents an image that is distinct from that caused by a horse: therefore, the object of concepts is distinction, *apoha*. This is a theoretical term, not a name expressive of direct experience.

As concepts by their very nature categorize, the image presented is distinct only from images of other species, not from other momentary particulars of the same species.[53] Otherwise, one single

---

[48] The topic and the aim of *apoha* theory changes completely. For Diṅnāga, the question was: how can our words (and concepts) successfully group external things? The answer included insights about how concepts are formed and words are learned. In this section, introducing Dharmakīrti's and especially Dharmottara's theories, the main problem seems to be how already existing concepts (*ideae innatae*) interact with sense images (immediate impressions). The only common point of the two approaches is the ideological stance. There are no real universals; and concepts (also words) cannot reach the external real particulars.

In the tentative identification of the two Buddhist positions occurring in this section as belonging to Dharmakīrti and Dharmottara I follow Kataoka (2009: 495[4]–482[17])

[49] From now on I usually leave *apoha* untranslated, as most of the time it simply means either 'nominal universal' or 'conceptually interpreted perceptual image' without any emphasis on exclusion, difference or negation.

[50] Interestingly this answer does not refer to the faultiness of Kumārila's arguments, although in some cases that is quite apparent; it seems a withdrawal before an unarmed opponent. Perhaps these Buddhists did not want to defend a theory where meaningful talk about *real external entities* is possible without real universals? Probably they were idealists or at least not fully committed to the reality of the external world. – In addition, this presentation allows Jayanta to pretend that Kumārila's arguments are valid, if *apoha* refers to anything but mental entities.

[51] The meaning of this vague expression may be that a universal concept is applied to mental images of individuals.

[52] I see a cow. First, I have an unanalysed sense-impression of its shape. Then the conceptual understanding ("It is a cow") awakens and somehow modifies the impression, projects or superimposes something onto it. As a result, I have the complex, conceptually interpreted visual image. The first two phases are unconscious, the third phase is what I normally realise when I perceive; I see the cow always *as a cow*, not just a patch of colours in space.

Unfortunately all the three (the unanalysed impression; what is projected onto it; and, most often, the resulting complex image) are called here *ākāra*, translated as 'image'. – The same word in the previous sections meant 'shape'.

[53] Some detail would be welcome: how do I make an *image* of a human – neither male nor female; neither baby, nor child, nor grown up, nor old; not white, not black, not red, not yellow; etc. etc. etc.

concept would give a complete description of a particular, and there would be no place left for other words and concepts to describe it.

This superimposed form is not external, since it is a superimposition; but it is not internal either, as it is not a mere idea.[54] In fact, it is nothing.[55] It is called *apoha* figuratively, on account of its effect.

The reference or ground of concepts has three characteristics[56] that would be impossible if it were an external real entity. It needs affirmation or denial by another conceptual (judgement);[57] it is specific; and it is thought to be similar to the external object. (1) For in an external *reality* affirmation, i.e. the addition of existence is pointless and denial is a contradiction. (2) The referent of a concept is automatically specific: “It is a cow, and not a horse”. ‘Cow’ cannot be understood without at the same time excluding other entities, so in effect the referent itself is this difference. Otherwise, sometimes this separation would be missing (e.g. “this is both a cow and a horse”); but when there is doubt (“this is either a cow or a horse”), the thing is not grasped at all.[58] (3) Since conceptual thought cannot have as its object an external real entity, it must have a non-external object: for in the external world it has access only to what has been already grasped by perception, and grasping it again would be absolutely pointless. The form or essence superimposed (on perception) is non-external; but it appears like the external. In fact, there is no similarity between the external and the superimposed except for the shadow of exclusion.[59]

Therefore, based on this effect, concepts can be said to have exclusion (i.e., *apoha*) as their object. So even though concepts operate positively (no negation involved), on the above grounds the use of the term *apoha* may be fit for scholarly purposes to name their referents, and also the referents of words.

This position (of Dharmottara) fits the model of error called *asat-khyāti,* “judging (the thing to be) what it is not”. The other position (of Dharmakīrti?) fits the *ātma-khyāti* model, “judging (the thing to be what is only in) oneself”. According to this position, the referent of a word or concept is but an

---

[54] *A-bodha-rūpa,* ‘not a form of understanding’. When I see a cow, the experience is completely different from when I only think of a cow or try to imagine it.

[55] This paradoxical statement, clearly very pleasant to followers of the doctrine of emptiness, can be understood as saying: *apoha* is not a thing; it is a process or operation; or, a synthesis of very different elements – like e.g. culture.

[56] *Rūpa-trayam.* This is clearly (even structurally) parallel, but not identical to Diṅnāga’s three conditions for the validity of an inference (*hetu-trairūpya*), see p. 130.

[57] Perhaps the meaning is: There is a slow worm in the grass. Automatically I identify it as a snake, so I see a snake (I have the *apoha* ‘snake’). Then I realise my mistake and I think, it *is not* a snake (denial), it *is* a legless lizard (affirmation).

[58] This curt statement could be expanded like this: where there is doubt, that part or aspect of the thing has not been grasped; but the concept itself is perfectly clear and specific, just we do not know if it is applicable to this thing or not.

The argument does not add the obvious: in contrast, external entities are not “specific” but strictly particular, differing from everything else, even their own states a minute ago. And this difference would not be grasped, as it is a relation (of two things), whereas perception itself grasps only one thing, its object.

[59] The thought behind this extremely terse sentence may be: There can be nothing more different than a material object and an idea. The cow is in the stall, weighs a ton, grows old and has four legs. The idea (of a cow) is nowhere (or anywhere), weightless, unchanging and has not even one leg. The only similarity is in how the *world* of ideas and the real world are *structured*. The way my concept of ‘cow’ and ‘horse’ contrasts is somehow analogous to the way a cow differs from a horse. This analogy of differences would be seen in the success of the “shadow of exclusion” being projected on the external world. Exclusion is a mental act, separating the species from others. Although a real, external entity is not in itself specific but strictly particular; still my conceptual interpretation of it is fruitful enough: I get milk from the cow and I ride the horse.

image in thought, reflecting the concept, and falsely appearing as external with its specific form added to it by the kinds of various latent impressions.[60]

6. How is action possible without the concepts reaching the objects?

According to these theories, conceptual cognition does not reach the external objects; then how is human action (directed at external real entities) possible at all?

(If people knew that they have no access to reality, they would stop all purposeful activity. Luckily,) the object of perceptual and conceptual cognition gets automatically identified – to be precise, their difference is unnoticed, as the conceptual understanding rises immediately after the perception. Therefore, people act as if they observed external reality. Their actions are normally successful, since there is a causal chain from the external object to the action: the object causes its perception, and that causes the conceptual understanding, which is the ground for action. [61]

However, it is only an illusion when they think that they reached the *object* they aimed at – in fact, they reached an object the predecessor of which was the cause of the *idea* that they desired.

7. Jayanta's refutation of the Buddhist criticism[62]

Since the Buddhists do not say that *apoha* as such is immediately given in awareness, the theory is based on the supposed nonexistence of the species or some other similar external referent of words.

Universals are perceptible

However, this supposition is groundless, for the species is as much a perceptible entity as the particular: their cognition appears when the senses and the object are close enough to each other, and there is nothing to refute or cast doubts on it.[63]

[64]Even if the idea of the species rises only immediately after the perception of the particular, that does not necessarily mean that this idea does not reach its object (i.e. that it is not derived from a real feature of the external object).

---

[60] *Vāsanā,* memory or unconscious effect of previous experiences, whether in this life or a previous one. – Here the idea is clearly that the innumerable experiences of innumerable lives have formed our concepts, and therefore they are quite accurate about the kinds of things there are. Consequently, even after very few observations we can successfully identify the species of a thing.

[61] The real question remains unanswered: why is this causal chain reliable? If the conceptual identification was just a superimposition, a free action of the mind unconstrained by the external world, why is it that I correctly identify a cow, and do not try to milk a tiger? The answer would most probably be that this is just so, things have such causal powers. But if there is such a causal power C in cow individuals that causes such perceptions in people that cause 'cow' concepts to rise in them – is not this C just a real cow-universal?

[62] Jayanta presents the Nyāya position through refuting one by one the Buddhist arguments against real universals. He loosely follows the order of his previous presentation (in section 2) of those arguments.

[63] This is the standard Nyāya description of reliable perceptual knowledge. – It is clearly false about the species. Seeing a plum tree in the winter, the specialist knows ("sees") at once that it is a plum tree, other people do not; however, they also see the particular tree. And the specialist does not see better – he knows more.

When the perception is yet conceptually unidentified, does it contain only the object's particularity or also its universality? There is no way to decide the question directly, for this phase of perception takes an extremely short time. (So this must remain a hypothetical extension of the theory,) the explanation has to be based on the observable facts of perception, i.e. perception as already conceptually identified.

We do notice the universal. If not from perception, where does this identification comes from?

— Clearly not from verbal knowledge, for we can distinguish species even when we do not know their name. E.g., when a South Indian comes to Rajasthan and sees a row of camels for the first time in his life he can see both the individual animals as distinct and also that they are all of the same kind.[65]

— It cannot come from memory, from remembering similar individuals and associating them. When I first see Elsie the cow and I remember Bessie that I have seen before, this is based on their universals being already noticed. For as particulars they are entirely distinct, consequently, one could not recall the other. So this kind of remembering cannot be used to explain the universal, on the contrary, it presupposes the universal; in effect, it proves that the universal is known directly from perception.[66] Further, I explicitly (and reliably) recognise that Elsie is also a *cow* like Bessie, and of course, the object of this recognition is the universal.

In fact, there are cases when we notice *only* the universal and not the particular! When there is a heap of rice in front of us, we do not see the individual grains of rice separately, only the common feature is perceived.[67]

Therefore, as both the individual and the universal are perceived, we must conclude that both belong to external reality. Normally both appear in consciousness together, and there is no reason to say that one is primary and the other secondary. True, the universal is in a sense relative: it is common with other individuals; but also the individual is relative: it is different from other individuals.[68]

---

[64] From now on Jayanta uses the standard Nyāya model of two-phase perception. In the first phase (*nir-vikalpaka*, 'conceptless') we have the uninterpreted sense data only, in the second, conceptual (*sa-vikalpaka*) phase we identify our perception as e.g. a cow. The two phases cannot be directly observed as separate for the process is too fast.

For Nyāya this analysis is useful to explain perceptual error (e.g. seeing a silver coin in the sand, where there is but a piece of mother of pearl) while maintaining that perception is infallible. The first phase is infallible, while the second phase may be erroneous. I see a shiny object in the sand (true and infallible), and I identify it as a silver coin (in this case erroneously).

[65] Inconclusive. When the South Indian goes to the zoo and sees a dromedary and a two-humped camel together, he might think that they are the same species; but they are not. It is safer to ask or look up in Wikipedia (verbal knowledge).

[66] The question is good; the answer is unconvincing. That on seeing Elsie I recall Bessie clearly shows that I stored it not only as an absolute particular with all details but also as a less definite, somewhat abstract entity (big four-legged horned animal) – but that is not Bessie's species. If I have never seen any other large bovid, then a gayal or even a buffalo may awaken in me the image of Bessie, demonstrating that I did *not* see the universal 'cow' on Bessie.

[67] A remarkable observation indeed, used for an unworthy purpose.

What it could show is that the particular is not given in sensation without mental analysis, contrary to the presupposition of the entire discussion so far. When I see a cow, my eyes perceive only coloured spots. It needs a huge amount of computing to join some of the spots into the image of the cow-particular and separate them from the rest as belonging to the surroundings. In the process, I use quite a lot of universals like cow (or animal), hay, stall etc.

In Jayanta's tricky example, what in fact happens is not that I see the rice-grain universal without seeing individual rice-grains, rather I see an individual of the type rice-heap. It is exactly like when I see a forest without noting its trees; or when I see a cow without observing its individual hairs.

[68] Verbal trick. Here Jayanta uses for 'individual' the word *viśeṣa*, which means also 'difference'; and in the latter meaning, it clearly is relative.

The position that in perception only the external entity is given without any relative feature like similarity or difference has no explanatory power.[69] For this neither-individual-nor-universal cannot be observed in the first, nonconceptual phase of perception (because that phase cannot be observed at all); while in the conceptual phase we already have both the individual and the universal.

Kumārila's dual aspect theory is unnecessary

Therefore, it seems sensible to accept with Kumārila the dual nature of reality – external objects have both a particular and a universal aspect. This position does not involve a contradiction: these aspects are of the opposite nature, but they do not exclude each other. Like a variegated object is both black and white (or like one person can be both father and son at the same time).

However, Kumārila took this position only because he thought it indefensible to accept that the universals reside in their individuals. But this is still the Nyāya theory, for universals are something beyond the particulars. All the Buddhist attacks against the external objectivity and real difference of particulars and universals are rejected by direct perception, which is weightier than any argument.[70]

Universals reside in their particulars

We have shown (with the example of the rice-heap) that the cognition of a universal is not inseparable from the cognition of the particular. It is true that a species cannot be spatially distinct from its individuals, but the reason is not that it is not something real beyond them, rather that they are its substrate, or in other words, that it is present in them. The species in its entirety resides in each of its individuals. This is an unusual relation, but since the universal is perceived in all its individuals, we have to accept it.[71]

This relation ('presence' or 'residence') is a kind of inherence; the species is inherent in the individuals. Inherence is an inseparable relation where the relata are not physically separable but conceptually different, like parts and whole or qualities and their substrate. This presence is not of the same kind as the presence of the thread in the beans of a necklace, for the species is not a physical object like the thread and therefore it has no parts.

Universals are omnipresent

The species is literally omnipresent according to the dominant Nyāya view; but it is imperceptible except in its individuals that have the power to manifest it in their own locations. This theory is

---

[69] It has; this is the Buddhist position that we perceive only the momentary particular. The next sentence does not add an argument for this sweeping statement; it just restates the (generally accepted) starting position.

[70] This is theoretically sound. Of course, if Jayanta really believed that universals are perceptible, he would just stop here. If I see a cow I will not argue with somebody who denies it; at most I will point at it. However, the perception of universals ("I see that it is a cow") is just like the perception of weight: a naive misinterpretation of the facts. Weight is a complicated real property that can sometimes be tolerably guessed from sense data (like when I feel the pressure of an object held in my hand); at other times it is just inferred, for how could I sense the weight of a mountain?

[71] Even if it were the case (but it is not) that whenever I perceive Bessie I would also perceive that it is a cow, it would not strictly follow that cowness is an entity that resides in Bessie. In Sanskrit this sounds somewhat persuasive, as in the scholastic language it is always possible to paraphrase "A is B" as "B-ness is present in A".

plausible, because otherwise we should suppose that cowness walks with a cow walking, and an immaterial entity like a universal cannot possibly walk.

Some Naiyāyikas hold that the species is present only in all its individuals but not in between. When an individual is born, it is born with the universal present in it. The universal was not there before and it did not move there – it is just the nature of the individual to be born as such. An analogous situation is when a red bull and a black cow have a white calf. Where does its whiteness come from? In any case, the double-negation theory has to face exactly the same difficulty: why is a particular born today excluded from non-cows?[72]

Reductionism is unsuccessful

The theory trying to avoid all the murky problems of the universals, according to which there are no universals, but individuals have a power to generate the cognition of belonging together (i.e. the cognition of a universal) – this theory is just verbally different from the previous one: this mysterious power will be nothing else but the undesired universal. The even more reductionist theory where there is not even this power, it just happens that on seeing certain individuals we have the idea that they are cows – it is impossible, as cognition reflects its object, so if we have the cognition that these are cows, there must be something in them causing this.

8. Refutation of Buddhist nominalism

There are indeed some common notions without a universal (based on an external relation), like the notion of a 'universal' itself – but these are exceptions necessitated by some factor[73] excluding universals here. Such exceptions must not be generalised to cases where that factor is not present. The situation is similar to when someone holds that a park is not a real individual as it is nothing but a group of separate individual trees – but he will not say that therefore pots are also not real entities![74]

The Buddhist attempt to explain all universals as based on an external relation, i.e. on having the same causal properties, is unsuccessful. These same (or similar) causal properties of the particulars are supposed to lead to the judgement that the particulars are the same (e.g., they are cows). However, such a judgement is impossible, for each perception produces a distinct concept-particular only; and their similarity cannot be grasped. Obviously not through perception; but also not through conceptual thought, for that is impossible on either (later) Buddhist theory. According to them, a concept refers

---

[72] The two Nyāya theories could be a classical target of positivist criticism. Can a situation be imagined that would prove the one theory true, the other faulty? No. Therefore, the two theories are equivalent, the difference being merely verbal. (The omnipresent universal in the first theory has no function at all, it is meaningless; and "the power to manifest cowness" is equivalent to the "cowness" of the second theory.) The next subsection suggests that Jayanta is fully aware of this; he probably does not say it explicitly because of the expected loyalty to one's own school.

[73] E.g., the theory just does not admit second-order universals; "universalness" would be clearly imperceptible; 'being', the *highest* universal, would be *under* it; etc.

[74] The example is very good and shows also the limitation of the argument. Because he *can* go on and say: and pots being nothing but aggregates of their atoms are also not real individuals (only "consensual truth" as most Buddhists would say). Similarly, the existence of some common notions without a universal does not necessitate the rejection of all universals, but clearly it can inspire an effort at reductionism.

either to a superimposed image or to a part of itself – and so it is unable to judge the similarity of other concepts.[75]

Even accepting that this comparison of concept-particulars works somehow, what is this 'similarity' it is supposed to notice? If it is something beyond the concept-particulars, then it is the universal under another name;[76] and there is no argument showing that it is anything but the external real universal.[77] On the other hand, if it is nothing beyond the concept-particulars, then it is different for each of them so it is no 'similarity' at all.

Actually, here is an incorrigible circularity. Having rejected real universals, the judgement of belonging to the same kind rests on the similar causal properties of the individuals. However, as those causal properties are actually distinct particulars, their similarity rests on their producing that judgement![78]

(Dharmakīrti) argued that conceptual identification can be *anyâpoha* only, i.e. exclusion of misidentification, otherwise conceptual thought would discover something that was not there in the perception. This argument has no weight, for the perceptual data can be analysed and also compared to other data. Even if such later cognitive operations would be impossible or meaningless, that would still not be a ground for supposing a mental operation ('exclusion of others') that is simply not experienced to be present.

Therefore, Kumārila's attack on the Buddhists stands unrefuted.[79]

9. Refutation of the psychologising apoha

(Dharmottara's) neither internal nor external irreal superimposition colouring the concepts is a bad joke. Cognition is by its very nature transparent and only something other, i.e. the external object could colour it. Latent impressions cannot, for their nature is also cognitive (and so transparent). A nonexistent superimposed something cannot do it either.

Furthermore, if the concepts inherit from the objects only the difference (*apoha*), there is absolutely no ground to suppose that the concepts would reflect only the difference from other kinds – it would also reflect the difference from other individuals of the same kind. Therefore, the concept would be a particular, and no inference or speech would be possible (as both presuppose general concepts).

Such a difference (*apoha*) is either something or nothing. If nothing, it has no effect at all on anything. If something, it is either external or internal (mental). If external, Kumārila's refutation works. If internal, (it is cognitive and so transparent, so) it cannot colour the concepts.

---

[75] I think it is a serious distortion. The Buddhist positions mentioned describe how a concept can be related to perceptual data, and they do not imply that conceptual thought cannot refer to or manipulate concepts, e.g. cannot compare them.

[76] Yes, that is the later Buddhist position: a nominal (conceptual) universal, an *apoha*.

[77] Taken literally, it is clearly false: a concept is *per definitionem* not external. The question could have been posed fruitfully: if these nominal universals correspond to some facts of external reality, why not call those facts a real universal?

[78] A mischievous argument. Actually there is no circularity – the trick is that the first "rests on" means 'caused by'; the second means 'known from'.

[79] Nothing that went before had any reference to Kumārila's arguments as presented by Jayanta. Either this is an unusually careless remark or there is a problem with the text; but see also footnote 50.

The three characteristics of the reference of a concept said (by Dharmottara, see p. 157) to be incompatible with its being an external object are in fact perfectly compatible with externality. (1) The concept in itself refers to the universal, so (with reference to an individual) affirmation or negation is needed. (2) An external object is also specific: a pot is a pot, not a cloth.[80]

10. Impossibility of action based on apoha

The Buddhist theory explaining how successful human activity is possible if the universals are nominal only was based on the automatic and unconscious identification of the object of perceptual and conceptual cognition. Now such an identification would result in something completely blurred that would effectively prohibit meaningful activity; or else the identification must have some object. That object can be either the perceptual object – then (it has a positive content, so) it is not an *apoha* theory; or the concept in its own form – this way (based not on reality but ideas[81]) leads nowhere.

If the conceptual would really appear as perceptual, it would not be a case of 'non-distinguishing': it would be simply an error. However, errors are revealed by their conflict with other observations, and we do not find signs of the erroneousness of human activity in general.

Therefore, the realist theory wins: conceptually interpreted perception is a valid source of information, as it reaches directly the external objects.

[80] (3), the referent's similarity to the real thing, is not discussed.

[81] Jayanta pretends to forget that we have here ideas causally connected to the perceptual data, not random ideas.

Bibliography

All Pali texts are quoted from the online *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipitaka* edition:
Pāḷi Tipiṭaka. Dharma Giri: Vipassana Research Institute. (http://www.tipitaka.org)
PTS refers to the page numbers in the respective volume of the edition of the Pali Text Society.

Sanskrit texts

Atharvaveda-Saṁhitā = R. Roth – W.D. Whitney (eds.) (1856): *Atharva Veda Sanhita.* Berlin: Ferd. Dümmler.

Vasubandhu: *Abhidharma-Kośa* = Swāmī Dwārikādās Śāstrī (ed.) (1998): *The Abhidharmakośa & Bhāṣya of Ācārya Vasubandhu with Sphuṭārthā Commentary of Ācārya Yaśomitra.* Bauddha Bhāratī Series 5–8. Vārāṇasī: Bauddha Bhāratī.

Īśā-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 405–411).

ṚV = *Ṛg-Veda-Saṁhitā* = Theodor Aufrecht (ed.) (1861–63): *Die Hymnen des Ṛigveda.* Berlin: Ferd. Dümmler.

Aitareya-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 314–323).

Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa = Martin Haug (ed.) (1863): *The Aitareya Brahmanam of the Rigveda.* Bombay: Government Central Book Depôt.

Kaṭha-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 372–403).

Udayana: *Kiraṇāvalī* = Jitendra S. Jetly (ed.) (1971): *Praśastapādabhāṣyam With the Commentary Kiraṇāvalī of Udayanācārya.* Gaekwad's Oriental Series 154. Baroda: Oriental Institute.

Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 324–361).

Krama-Dīpikā = *Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra-Vṛtti* = Dvivedī (1969: 74–89)

Gauḍapāda-Bhāṣya = T.G. Mainkar (ed.) (2004): *Sāṁkhyakārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa. With the Commentary of Gauḍapāda.* The Vrajajivan Indological Series 36. Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan.

Gheraṇḍa-Saṁhitā = Rai Bahadur Srisa Chandra Vasu (1914–15): *The Gheranda Samhita.* Allahabad: Panini Office. Repr. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal 1996.

Chāndogya-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 166–287).

Śaṅkara: *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣya = Ten Principal Upaniṣads with Śāṅkarabhāṣya.* Works of Śaṅkarācārya in Original Sanskrit 1, 351–606. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1964, repr. 1992.

Jaya-Maṅgalā = Sharma–Vangiya (1994: 65–119)

Tattva-Samāsa-Sūtra = Dvivedī (1969: 1–18)

Taittirīya-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 288–313).

Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa = R. Shama Sastry (ed.) (1921): *The Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa with the commentary of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara Miśra supplemented with Sāyaṇa's. Ashṭaka II.* University of Mysore Oriental Library Publications, Sanskrit Series 57. Mysore: Government Branch Press.

Yāska: *Nirukta* = Sarup, Lakshman (1920–27): *The Nighantu and the Nirukta. The Oldest Indian Treatise on Etimology, Philology and Semantics*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr. 2002.

Vātsyāyana Pakṣilasvāmin: *Nyāya-Bhāṣya* = Nyaya-Tarkatirtha–Tarkatirtha (1936–44).

Jayanta Bhaṭṭa: *Nyāya-Mañjarī*, Apoha (5. Āhnika, first part) = Kataoka (2011, 2008, 2009, 2010)

Uddyotakara: *Nyāya-Vārttika* = Nyaya-Tarkatirtha–Tarkatirtha (1936–44).

Vācaspati Miśra: *Nyāya-Sūcī-Nibandha* = (a) Nagasampige (1992: I. 35–65).
(b) Daya Krishna (2004: 289–308).

Nyāya-Sūtra = Nyaya-Tarkatirtha–Tarkatirtha (1936–44).

Gaṁbhīravaṁśaja: *Nyāya-Sūtra-Vivaraṇa* = Nagasampige (1992: II).

Vidyāraṇya: *Pañcadaśī* = Swāmī Swāhānanda (tr.) (1967): *Pañcadaśī of Śrī Vidyāraṇya Swāmī.* Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math.

Praśastapāda: *Padārtha-Dharma-Saṁgraha* = Bronkhorst–Ramseier (1994: 1–88).

Avasthī, Śivaśaṅkar (ed.) (1994): *Puruṣasūktabhāṣyasaṅg[r]ahaḥ.* Vidyābhavana Prācyavidyā Granthamālā 71. Vārāṇasī: Caukhambā Vidyābhavana (repr.)

Diṅnāga: *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, 5th chapter (Anyāpoha) and the (auto?) commentary = Pind, Ole Holten (2009): *Dignāga's Philosophy of Language: Dignāga on anyāpoha. Pramāṇasamuccaya V: Texts, Translation and Annotation*. (Appendix I.) PhD dissertation at Universität Wien.

Aśvaghoṣa: *Buddha-Carita* = E. H. Johnston (ed.) (1936): *The Buddhacarita: Or, acts of the Buddha.* Panjab University Oriental Publications 31. Lahore, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1995.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 29–165).

Brahmâṇḍa-Purāṇa = *Brahmanda-Purana.* Based on the edition Bombay: Venkatesvara Steam Press (or a reprint thereof). Input by members of the SANSKNET-project. [Retrieved 06.09.2013.] http://fiindolo.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/3_purana/brndp1_u.htm

Bodhāyana Kavi: *Bhagavad-Ajjukīya* = P. Anujan Achan (ed.) (1925): *Bhagavadajjukiyam. A Prahasana of Bodhayana Kavi with Commentary.* Jayantamangalam: Office of the Paliyam, MSS. Library.

Bhagavad-Gītā = MBh VI.23–40.

Manu-Smṛti = J.L. Shastri (ed.) (1983): *Manusmṛti. With the Sanskrit commentary Manvartha-Muktāvalī of Kullūka Bhaṭṭa.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr. 1996.

MBh = *Mahā-Bhārata* = R.N. Dandekar (ed.) (1971–76): *The Mahābhārata. Text as Constituted in the Critical Edition.* Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

Patañjali: *Mahābhāṣya* = Shri Bhargava Shastri Joshi (ed.) (1991): *Vyākaranamahābhāsya of Patañjali. With the Commentary Bhāṣyapradīpa of Kaiyaṭa Upādhyāya & the Super Commentary Bhāṣyapradīpoddyota of Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa. Vol. IV.* Vrajajivan Prachyabharati Granthamala 23. Repr. Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan.

Mahā-Vyutpatti = Csoma de Kőrös (1984)

Māṭhara-Vṛtti = Sharma–Vangiya (1994: 1–64)

Mīmāṁsā-Sūtra = Mohan Lal Sandal (ed.) (1923–25): *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras of Jaimini.* The Sacred Books of the Hindus 27–28. Allahabad, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1980.

Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 434–455).

Maitrī-Upaniṣad = Radhakrishnan (1953: 793–859).

Yukti-Dīpikā = Albrecht Wezler & Shujun Motegi (eds.) (1998): *Yuktidīpikā. The Most Significant Commentary of the Sāṁkhyakārikā.* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Yoga-Sūtra = Gosvāmī Dāmodara Śāstrī (ed.) (1989): *Sāṁkhya-Yoga-Darśanam*. Kashi Sanskrit Series 110. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan.[2]

Vājasaneyi-Saṁhitā = Ravi Prakash Arya (ed.) (2002): *Yajurveda Saṁhitā. Sanskrit text, English translation and notes. According to the translation of R.T.H. Griffith.* Parimal Sanskrit Series 39. Delhi: Parimal Publications.[3]

Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra = Jambuvijayaji (1961).

Vyāsa-Bhāṣya = Rāma Prasāda (ed.) (1995): *Pātañjali's Yoga Sūtras with the commentary of Vyāsa and the gloss of Vāchaspati Miśra.* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.[2]

Vyomaśiva: *Vyomavatī* = Gaurinath Sastri (ed.) (1983–84): *Vyomavati of Vyomaśivācārya*. M. M. Śivakumāraśāstri-Granthamālā 6. Varanasi: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University.

Kālidāsa: *Śakuntalā* = Monier Williams (ed.) (1876): *Śakuntalā by Kālidāsa*. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series 12. Oxford: Clarendon Press, repr. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office 1961.

Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa = *Shrimad-Vajsaneyi-Madhyandin-Shatpath-Brāhmanam*. Bombay: Laksmi-venkatesvara Press, repr. Delhi: Nag Publishers 1990.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa: *Śloka-Vārttika*, Apohavāda = Raja, Kunhan C. (1946): *Ślokavārtikaṭīkā (Śarkarikā) of Bhaṭṭaputra Jayamiśra*. Madras: University of Madras.

Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad = Olivelle (1998: 413–433).

Samāsa-Sūtra-Sarvôpakāriṇī Ṭīkā = Dvivedī (1969: 59–65)

Mādhavācārya: *Sarva-Darśana-Saṁgraha* = (a) E.B. Cowell – A.E. Gough (1986): *Sarva-Darśana-Saṅgraha of Mādhavācārya.* Ed. K.L. Joshi. Parimal Sanskrit series 2. Delhi: Parimal Publications. (b) Īśwarachandra Vidyāsāgara (ed.) (1853–58): *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha, or an Epitome of the Different Systems of Indian Philosophy by Mādhavāchārya*. Bibliotheca Indica 63 & 142. Repr. Calcutta: The Asiatic Society 1986.

SK = *Sāṁkhya-Kārikā* = Ruzsa (1997).

Vācaspati Miśra: *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Kaumudī* = Srinivasa Ayya Srinivasan (ed.) (1967): *Vācaspatimiśras Tattvakaumudī: Ein Betrag zur Textkritik bei kontaminierter Überlieferung.* Hamburg: Cram, De Gruyter.

Kavirāja Yati: *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Pradīpa* = Dvivedī (1969: 96–113)

Bhāvāganeśa: *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Yāthārthya-Dīpana* = Dvivedī (1969: 33–58)

Ṣimānanda: *Sāṁkhya-Tattva-Vivecana* = Dvivedī (1969: 1–32)

Sāṁkhya-Vṛtti (V_2). Edited by Esther A. Solomon. Ahmedabad: Gujarat University 1973.

Sāṁkhya-Saptati-Vṛtti (V_1). Edited by Esther A. Solomon. Ahmedabad: Gujarat University 1973.

Sāṁkhya-Sūtra = Janārdana-Śāstrī Pāṇḍeya (ed.) (1989): *Sāṁkhya-Darśanam Vyākhyā-catuṣṭayôpetaṁ.* Dillī: Motilāl Banārsīdās.

Sāṁkhya-Sūtra-Vivaraṇa = Dvivedī (1969: 66–73)

Sāmaveda-Saṁhitā = Ravi Prakash Arya (ed.) (2001): *Sāmaveda Saṁhitā. Sanskrit text with English translation of R.T.H. Griffith.* Parimal Sanskrit Series 37. Delhi: Parimal Publications.[2]

Suśruta-Saṁhitā = Śrībhāskar Govondjī Ghāṇekar (ed.) (1975): *Suśrutasaṁhitā*. Dillī: Motilāl Banārsīdās, repr. 1997.

Haṭha-Yoga-Pradīpikā = Pancham Sinh (1914–15): *The Hatha Yoga Pradipika.* Allahabad: Panini Office. Repr. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal 1992.

Secondary sources

Allchin, Bridget – Raymond Allchin (1968): *The Birth of Indian Civilization. India and Pakistan before 500 B.C.* Penguin Books.

Aristotle (1996): *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Tr. Harris Rackham. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature. Ware: Wordsworth Editions.

Barnes, Jonathan (1979): *The Presocratic Philosophers*. London: Routledge, repr. 1996.

Barua, Benimadhab (1921): *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy.* Calcutta, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1998.

Basak, Radhagovinda (ed.) (1971): *The Prākrit Gāthā-saptaśatī, Compiled by Sātavāhana King Hāla.* Bibliotheca Indica 295. Calcutta: The Asiatic Society.

Bhattacharyya, Narendra Nath (1977): *The Indian Mother Goddess.* Delhi: Manohar.[2]

Birrell, Anne (1993): *Chinese Mythology. An Introduction*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP.

Birtalan Ágnes (ed.) (1998): *Miért jön a nyárra tél? Mongol eredetmondák és mítoszok.* [Why winter follows summer? Mongolian myths and legends of origins.] Budapest: Terebess.

Bodnár M. István (1990): *Being Bound. A Parmenidean Itinerary.* Unpublished CSc thesis at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest.

Bodnár M. István – Klima Gyula – Ruzsa Ferenc (1986): “Parmenidész igazolása. Logikai interpretáció.” *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 1986/3–4, 285–298. [An English version, “Parmenides Proved. A Logical Interpretation” can be found in Bodnár (1990: 55–78.]

Brinkhaus, Horst (2007): “ ‘Weltuntergang’ (pralaya, pratisaṃcara etc.) in den Purāṇas.” In Karin Preisendanz (ed.): *Expanding and merging horizons: contributions to South Asian and cross-cultural studies in commemoration of Wilhelm Halbfass*, 653–666. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Bronkhorst, Johannes (1993): *The Two Sources of Indian Asceticism.* Bern: Peter Lang, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1998.

Bronkhorst, Johannes (1994): "Once again Vaiśeṣika Sūtra 3.1.13." *Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques* 48/2, 665–681.

Bronkhorst, Johannes (1999): "Is there an inner conflict of tradition?" In Bronkhorst–Deshpande (1999: 33–57).

Bronkhorst, Johannes (1999a): "Nāgārjuna and *apoha.*" In Katsura (1999: 17–24).

Bronkhorst, Johannes (2007): *Greater Magadha. Studies in the culture of early India.* Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section 2 South Asia, 19. Leiden: Brill.

Bronkhorst, Johannes – Madhav Deshpande (eds.) (1999): *Aryan and Non-Aryan in South Asia. Evidence, Interpretation and Ideology.* Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora 3. Cambridge: Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Harvard University.

Bronkhorst, Johannes – Karin Preisendanz (eds.) (2010): *From Vasubandhu to Caitanya. Studies in Indian Philosophy and Its Textual History.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Bronkhorst, Johannes – Yves Ramseier (1994): *Word index to the Praśastapādabhāṣya: a complete word index to the printed editions of the Praśastapādabhāṣya*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Bryant, Edwin F. (1999): "Linguistic substrata and the indigenous Aryan debate." In Bronkhorst–Deshpande (1999: 59–84).

Bubenik, Vit (1996): *The Structure and Development of Middle Indo-Aryan Dialects.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Bühnemann, Gudrun (1988): *Pūjā. A Study in Smārta Ritual*. Publications of the De Nobili Library 15. Vienna.

van Buitenen, J. A. B. (1955): "Vācārambhaṇam." *Indian Linguistics* 16, 157–162.

van Buitenen, J. A. B. (1957): "Studies in Sāṁkhya (III)." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 77, 88–107.

van Buitenen, J. A. B. (1958): "Vācārambhaṇam reconsidered." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 2, 295–305.

Burkert, W. (1969): "Das Proömium des Parmenides und die Katabasis des Pythagoras." *Phronesis* 16, 1–30.

Burrow, Thomas (1955): *The Sanskrit Language.* London: Faber & Faber.

Chakravarti, Pulinbihari (1951): *Origin and Development of the Sāṁkhya System of Thought.* Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing and Publishing House, repr. Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation 1975.

Chakravarti, Mahadev (1994): *The Concept of Rudra-Śiva through the Ages.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass[2], repr. 2002.

Chattopadhyaya, Debiprasad (1959): *Lokāyata. A Study in Ancient Indian Materialism.* Delhi: People's Publishing House.

Chintamani, T.R. (1929): "A note on the date of the Tattvasamāsa". *The Journal of Oriental Research Madras* 1928*,* 145–147.

Coxon, A. H. (1986): *The Fragments of Parmenides. A critical text with introduction, translation, the ancient* testimonia *and a commentary.* Assen: Van Gorcum.

Crawford, John Martin (tr.) (1904): *The Kalevala. The Epic Poem of Finland*. Cincinnati: The Robert Clarke Company.[3]

Csoma de Kőrös, Alexander (1984): *Sanskrit–Tibetan–English Vocabulary, Being an Edition and Translation of the Mahāvyutpatti.* Collected Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös. Edited by J. Terjék. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.

Dasgupta, Surendranath (1922): *A History of Indian Philosophy. Vol. I.* Cambridge, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1988.

Dasgupta, S.N. (1930): *Yoga Philosophy. In Relation to other Systems of Indian Thought*. Calcutta, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 2005.

Daya Krishna (2004): *The Nyāya Sūtras: A New Commentary on an Old Text.* Sri Garib Das Oriental Series 287. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.

DEDR: Thomas Burrow and Murray Barnson Emeneau (1984): *A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.[2]

Deshpande, Madhav M. (1993): "Genesis of Ṛgvedic retroflexion: a historical and sociolinguistic investigation." In —: *Sanskrit & Prakrit. Sociolinguistic Issues*, 129–196. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Deussen, Paul (1912): *The System of the Vedanta.* Tr. by Charles Johnston. Repr. Delhi: Low Price Publications 2003.

Deussen, Paul (1921): *Sixty Upaniṣads of the Veda.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1980, repr. 1990. [A translation by V. M. Bedekar and G. B. Palsule of the *Sechzig Upaniṣad's des Veda.* Leipzig.]

Dezső, Csaba (ed., tr.) (2005): *Jayanta Bhaṭṭa: Much Ado About Religion*. Clay Sanskrit Library. New York: New York UP & JJC Foundation.

Dvivedī, Vindhyeśvarī Prasāda (ed.) (1969): *Sāṁkhya-Saṅgraha. A Collection of nine works on the Sāṁkhya Philosophy, viz. Sāṁkhyatattvavivecana of Śrī Ṣimānanda (Kṣemendra), Sāṁkhyatattvayāthārthyadīpana of Śrī Bhāvāganeśa, Sarvopakāriṇī Commentary on the Sūtras of Kapila, Sāṁkhyasūtravivaraṇa, Tattvasamāsasūtravṛtti, Sāṁkhyārthatattvapradīpikā, Sāṁkhyatattvapradīpa of Kavirāja Yati, Tattvamīmāṁsā of Ācārya Kṛṣṇa Miśra and Sāṁkhyaparibhāṣā.* Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series 50. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office.[2]

Edgerton, Franklin (1993): *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary. Vol. II: Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Eliade, Mircea (1994–96): *Vallási hiedelmek és eszmék története*. Budapest: Osiris–Századvég. (Originally *Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses*. Paris: Éditions Payot, 1976–83.)

Erdoes, Richard – Alfonso Ortiz (1984): *American Indian Myths and Legends*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Erdosy, George (1993): "The archæology of early Buddhism." In N.K. Wagle and F. Watanabe (eds.): *Studies on Buddhism in Honour of Professor A.K. Warder*, 40–56. Toronto. Quoted in Bronkhorst (1999: 48).

Fairservis, Walter A. (1975): *The Roots of Ancient India.* Chicago. Quoted in Shaffer–Lichtenstein (1999: 255).

Fairservis, Walter [A]. (1997): "The Harappan Civilization and the Ṛgveda." In Witzel (1997a: 61–68).

Flintoff, Everard (1980): "Pyrrho and India." *Phronesis* 26/1, 88–108.

Frauwallner, Erich (1953–56): *History of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1973, repr. 1993. [Tr. by V. M. Bedekar of the *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie*. Salzburg.]

Frauwallner, Erich (1984): "Die ursprüngliche Anfang der Vaiśeṣika-Sūtren." In —: *Nachgelassene Werke 1. Aufsätze, Beiträge, Skizzen* herausgegeben von Ernst Steinkellner. ÖAW Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Sitzungsberichte 438 / Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Sprachen und Kulturen Südasiens 19, 35–41. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Geldner, Karl Friedrich (1951–57): *Der Rig-Veda. Aus dem Sanskrit ins Deutsche übersetzt und mit einem laufenden Kommentar versehen*. Harvard Oriental Series 33–36. Cambridge, MA: Harvard U.P.

Gimbutas, Marija (1989): *The Language of the Goddess.* London: Thames & Hudson, repr. 2001.

Gombrich, Richard F. (1994): *Theravāda Buddhism. A social history from ancient Benares to modern Colombo*. London: Routledge.

Gombrich, Richard F. (1997): *How Buddhism Began. The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings.* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

Goodall, Dominic (ed.) (1996): *Hindu Scriptures*. London: Phoenix Giant.

Gopal, Lallanji (2000): *Retrieving Sāṁkhya History.* Contemporary Researches in Hindu Philosophy & Religion 11. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld (P).

Grassmann, Hermann (1873): *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda.* Leipzig, repr. Delhi 1999.

Grassmann, Hermann (1876–77): *Rig-Veda. Übersetzt und mit kritischen und erläuternden Anmerkungen versehen.* Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus.

Griffith, Ralph T. H. (1973): *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda. Translated with a Popular Commentary by —.* Edited by Prof. J. L. Shastri. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr. 1995.

Griffiths, Arlo – Jan E.M. Houben (eds.) (2004): *The Vedas. Text, Language & Ritual.* Groningen: Egbert Forsten.

Halbfass, Wilhelm (ed.) (1995): *Philology and Confrontation: Paul Hacker on Traditional and Modern Vedānta.* Albany: SUNY Press.

Hale, Wash Edward (1986): *Ásura in Early Vedic Religion*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr. 1999.

Hanefeld, Erhardt (1976): *Philosophische Haupttexte der älteren Upaniṣaden*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

Hattori, Masaaki (1968): *Dignāga, On Perception, being the Pratyakṣapariccheda of Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya: from the Sanskrit fragments and the Tibetan versions translated and annotated*. Harvard Oriental Series 47. Cambridge: Harvard U.P.

Hattori, Masaaki (2011): "The Apoha Theory as Referred to in the *Nyāyamañjarī.*" In Siderits–Tillemans–Chakrabarti (2011: 134–148).

Hayes, Richard P. (1988): *Dignaga on the Interpretation of Signs*. Studies of Classical India 9. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Herzberger, Radhika (1986): *Bhartṛhari and the Buddhists: an essay in the development of fifth and sixth century Indian thought*. Studies of Classical India 8. Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company.

Hillebrandt, Alfred (1999): *Vedic Mythology*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.[3] (Originally *Vedische Mythologie.* Breslau 1927–29.[2])

Hinüber, Oskar v. (1997): "Old age and old monks in Pāli Buddhism." In: Susanne Formanek – Sepp Linhart (eds): *Aging. Asian Concepts and Experiences. Past and Present*, 65–78. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Hinüber, Oskar von (2001): *Das ältere Mittelindisch im Überblick.* Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Klasse 467; Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Sprachen und Kulturen Südasiens 20. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.[2]

Hock, Hans Henrich (1996): "Pre-Ṛgvedic Convergence Between Indo-Aryan (Sanskrit) and Dravidian? A Survey of the Issues and Controversies." In Jan E.M. Houben (ed.): *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit. Contributions to the History of the Sanskrit Language*. Brill's Indological Library 13, 17–58. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Hock, Hans Heinrich (1999): "Through a glass darkly: Modern 'racial' interpretations vs. textual and general prehistoric evidence on ārya and dāsa/dasyu in Vedic society." In Bronkhorst–Deshpande (1999: 145–174).

Horner, I. B. (1957): *The Collection of the Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikāya). Vol. II. The Middle Fifty Discourses (Majjhimapaṇṇāsa).* Oxford: The Pali Text Society, repr. 1994.

Hugon, Pascale (2011): "Dharmakīrti's Discussion of Circularity." In Siderits–Tillemans–Chakrabarti (2011: 109–124).

Hume, Robert Ernest (1931): *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. Delhi: Oxford U.P.[2], repr. 1991.

Ingalls, Daniel H. H. (1968): "Editor's Foreword." In Hattori (1968: v–viii).

Isaacson, Harunaga (1995): *Materials for the study of the Vaiśeṣika system.* Unpublished PhD thesis at the Rijksuniversiteit Leiden.

Jacobi, Hermann (1886): *Ausgewählte Erzählungen in Mahārāshṭrī. Zur Einführung in das Studium des Prākṛit. Grammatik – Text – Wörterbuch.* Leipzig: Hirzel, repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1967.

Jambuvijayaji, Muni Śrī (ed.) (1961): *Vaiśeṣikasūtra of Kaṇāda with the commentary of Candrānanda*. Baroda: Oriental Institute, repr. 1982.

Ježić, Mislav (1992): "Parmenides and Uddālaka. The Upanishads and the Presocratics: The Problem of Understanding the Origins of Different Traditions." *Synthesis Philosophica* 16/2, 427–440.

Johnston, E. H. (1937): *Early Sāṁkhya. An Essay on its Historical Development according to the Texts.* London, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1974.

Jouveau-Dubreuil, G. (1917): *The Pallavas.* Pondicherry: sold by the author.

Kalupahana, David J. (1994): *A History of Buddhist Philosophy. Continuities and Discontinuities.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Kataoka, Kei (2008): "A Critical Edition of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī: The Section on Kumārila's Refutation of the Apoha Theory." *The Memoirs of the Institute of Oriental Culture* 154, 212(1)–182(31).

Kataoka, Kei (2009): "A Critical Edition of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī: The Buddhist Refutation of Kumārila's Criticism of Apoha." *The Memoirs of the Institute of Oriental Culture* 156, 498(1)–458(41).

Kataoka, Kei (2010): "A Critical Edition of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī: Jayanta's View on Jāti and Apoha." *The Memoirs of Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia* 158, 220(61)–168(113).

Kataoka, Kei (2011): "A Critical Edition of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī: The Buddhist refutation of jāti." *The Memoirs of Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia* 160, 636(1)–594(43).

Kataoka, Kei – Alex Watson (2013): "The Apoha Section of the Nyāyamañjarī." Forthcoming in the follow-up volume for the Apoha Workshop in Vienna, 2012.

Katsura, Shoryu (ed.) (1999): *Dharmakīrti's Thought and Its Impact on Indian and Tibetan Philosophy. Proceedings of the Third International Dharmakīrti Conference. Hiroshima, November 4–6, 1997.* Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Kaviraj, M.M. Gopinath (1938): "A Short Note on Tattvasamāsa." In M.D. Shastri (ed): *The Princess of Wales Sarasvati Bhavana Studies.* Vol X. Benares: Government Sanskrit Library, 30–34.

Keith, Arthur Berriedale (tr.) (1920): *Rigveda Brahmanas: The Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇas of the Rigveda.* Harvard Oriental Series 25; repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1981.

Keith, Arthur Berriedale (1921): *The Karma-Mīmāṁsā.* The Heritage of India Series, repr. Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint corporation 1978.

Keith, Arthur Berriedale (1925): *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads.* Harvard Oriental Series 31–32; repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1989.

Keith, Arthur Berriedale (1949): *The Sāṁkhya System. A History of the Samkhya Philosophy*. Calcutta: Y.M.C.A. Publishing House.[2]

Killingley, Siew-Yue – Dermot Killingley (1995): *Sanskrit.* Languages of the World/Materials. München: Lincom Europa.

King, L.W. (tr.) (2004): *Enuma Elish: The Epic Of Creation*. Kessinger Publishing.

Kirk, G. S. – J. E. Raven – M. Schofield (1983): *The Presocratic Philosophers*. Cambridge U.P.[2], repr. 1995.

Kobayashi, Masato (2004): *Historical Phonology of Old Indo-Aryan Consonants*. Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa Monograph Series 42. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Komoróczy Géza (1979): *A šumer irodalmi hagyomány*. [The Sumerian literary tradition.] Budapest: Magvető.

Kósa Gábor (2007): "Creatio ex gigante. A kínai Pangu-mítosz forrásai." *Vallástudományi Szemle* 2007/2, 173–205.

Kósa, Gábor (2009): "Pangu's Birth and Death as Recorded in a Tang Dynasty Buddhist Source." *Archiv orientální / Oriental Archive* 77/2, 169–192.

Krishnamurti, Bhadriraju (2003): *The Dravidian Languages.* Cambridge: Cambridge U.P.

Kuiper, Franciscus Bernardus Jacobus (1974): "The Genesis of a Linguistic Area." *International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics* 3, 133–153.

Kulke, Hermann – Dietmar Rothermund (1998): *A History of India.* London: Routledge.[3]

Larson, Gerald James (1980): "The format of technical philosophical writing in ancient India: Inadequacies of conventional translations." *Philosophy East and West* 30/3, 375–380.

Larson, Gerald James (2008): "Introduction to the Philosophy of Yoga." In G.J. Larson – R.S. Bhattacharya (eds.): *Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation.* Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies 12, 19–159. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Larson, Gerald James – Ram Shankar Bhattacharya (eds.) (1987): *Sāṁkhya. A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy*. Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies 4. Princeton: Princeton U.P.

Leggett, Trevor (1992): *Śaṅkara on the Yoga Sūtra-s. A Full Translation of the Newly discovered Text.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Lehmann, Thomas (1994): *Grammatik des Alttamil, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Caṅkam-Texte des Dichters Kapilar.* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Lincoln, Bruce (1986): *Myth, Cosmos and Society. Indo-European Themes of Creation and Destruction.* Cambridge MA: Harvard U.P.

Lockwood, Michael *et al.* (2001): *Pallava Art.* Madras: Tambaram Research Associates.

Lockwood, Michael – A. Vishnu Bhat (1991): *King Mahendravarman's Plays. The Farce of the Pious Courtesan and A Farce of Drunken Sport.* Madras: Tambaram Research Associates.

Maas, Philipp André (2006): *Samādhipāda. Das erste Kapitel des Pātañjalayogaśāstra zum ersten Mal kritisch ediert.* Indologica Halensis – Geisteskultur Indiens. Texte und Studien, 9. Aachen: Shaker Verlag.

Macdonell, Arthur Anthony (1917): *A Vedic Reader for Students.* Oxford U.P., repr. Delhi 1995.

Macdonell, Arthur Anthony – Arthur Berriedale Keith (1912): *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects.* London, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1995.

Mahadevan, Iravathan (2003): *Early Tamil Epigraphy. From the Earliest Times to the Sixth Century A.D.* Harvard Oriental Series 62. Cambridge MA: Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Harvard University.

Mani, Vettam (1975): *Purāṇic Encyclopaedia. A comprehensive Work with Special Reference to the Epic and Purānic Literature.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr. 1998.

Mayrhofer, Manfred (1992–96): *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen.* Heidelberg: Winter.

McEvilley, Thomas (2002): *The Shape of Ancient Thought: Comparative Studies in Greek and Indian Philosophies.* New York: Allworth Press.

McIntosh, Jane R. (2008): *The ancient Indus Valley: new perspectives*. Understanding ancient civilization series. Sanza Barbara: ABC-CLIO.

Mehlig, Johannes (1987): *Weisheit des alten Indien. Band 1: Vorbuddhistische und nichtbuddhistische Texte*. Leipzig: Gustav Kiepenheuer.

Müller, F. Max (1899): *The six Systems of Indian Philosophy.* New York: Longmans, Green and Co.

Nagasampige, Anandateertha V. (ed.) (1992): *Nyāyasūtravivarṇam of Gambhīravamsaja*. University of Mysore Oriental Research Institute Series 181. Mysore: Oriental Research Institute.

Nakamura, Hajime (1950–56): *A History of Early Vedānta Philosophy.* Tokyo. English translation: Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1983, repr. 1990.

Nakamura, Hajime (1975): *A Comparative History of Ideas.* Tokyo, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1992.

Norman, K.R. (1982): "The four noble truths: A problem of Pāli syntax." In: L.A. Hercus et al. (eds): *Indological and Buddhist Studies. Volume in Honour of J.W. de Jong on his Sixtieth Birthday,* 377–391. Canberra: Faculty of Asian Studies.

Nyaya-Tarkatirtha, Taranatha – Amarendramohan Tarkatirtha (eds.) (1936–44): *Nyāyadarśanam with Vātsyāyana's Bhāṣya, Uddyotakara's Vārttika, Vācaspati Miśra's Tātparyaṭīkā & Viśvanātha's Vṛtti.* Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing & Publishing House, repr. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal 1985.

Oberlies, Thomas (1998): *Die Religion des Ṛgveda*. Publications of the De Nobili Research Library 26–27. Wien.

O'Flaherty, Wendy Doniger (1981): *The Rig Veda. An Anthology. One hundred and eight hymns, selected, translated and annotated by –.* London: Penguin Classics.

Oldenberg, Hermann (1988): *The Religion of the Veda.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. (Originally *Die Religion des Veda*. Berlin 1916.[2])

Olivelle, Patrick (1993): *The* Āśrama *System. The History and Hermeneutics of a Religious Institution.* Oxford U.P.

Olivelle, Patrick (1998): *The Early Upaniṣads. Annotated Text and Translation.* New York: Oxford U.P.

Pande, Govind Chandra (1995): *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.[4]

Parpola, Asko (2004): "From Archaelogy to a Stratigraphy of Vedic Syncretism: The banyan tree and the water buffalo as Harappan-Dravidian symbols of royalty, inherited in succession by Yama, Varuṇa and Indra, divine kings of the first three layers of Aryan speakers in South Asia." In Griffiths–Houben (2004: 479–515).

Patil, Parimal G. (2011): "Constructing the Content of Awareness Events." In Siderits–Tillemans–Chakrabarti (2011: 149–169).

Piggott, Stuart (1950): *Prehistoric India.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Pind, Ole (1991): "Dignāga on *śabdasāmānya* and *śabdaviśeṣa*." In Steinkellner (1991: 269–280).

Pind, Ole (1999): "Dharmakīrti's Interpretation of *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti* V 36: *śabdo 'rthāntara-nivṛttiviśiṣṭān eva bhāvān āha.*" In Katsura (1999: 317–332).

Pind, Ole (2011): "Dignāga's Apoha Theory: Its Presuppositions and Main Theoretical Implications." In Siderits–Tillemans–Chakrabarti (2011: 64–82).

Pischel, Richard (1981): *A Grammar of the Prākrit Languages.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Popper, Karl (1998): *The World of Parmenides. Essays on the Presocratic Enlightenment*. London: Routledge, repr. 2001.

Potter, Karl H. (ed.) (1995): *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies. Bibliography (Third Edition).* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. – Updated online: http://faculty.washington.edu/kpotter/xhome.htm

Potter, Karl H. (ed.) (1999): *Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.* Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies 8. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr. 2002.

Potter, Karl H. – Gerald J. Larson (1987): "Sāṁkhyakārikā." In Larson–Bhattacharya (1987: 151–163).

Potter, Karl H. et al. (eds.) (1996): *Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.* Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies 7. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Preisendanz, Karin (1994): "Vaiśeṣikasūtra IV.1.9 and its two traditions of interpretation."*Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques* 48/2, 867–890.

Preisendanz, Karin (2009): "Logic, debate and epistemology in ancient Indian Medical science – An investigation into the history and historiography of Indian philosophy." *Indian Journal of History of Science* 44/2, 261–312.

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli (1929): *Indian Philosophy*. Oxford U.P.[2], repr. Delhi 1994.

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli (1953): *The Principal Upanishads. Edited with introduction, text, translation and notes by –.* Oxford U.P., repr. Delhi 1992.

Rajam, V.S. (1992): *A Reference Grammar of Classical Tamil Poetry (150 B.C. – pre-fifth / sixth century A.D.)* Memoirs of The American Philosophical Society 199. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society.

Ramaratnam, S. (1987): *Prahasana in Sanskrit Literature.* Mysore: Kavyalaya Publishers.

Ramat, Anna Giacalone – Paolo Ramat (eds.) (1998): *The Indo-European Languages*. Routledge Language Family Descriptions. London: Routledge.

Ratnagar, Shereen (1999): "Does Archæology Hold the Answers?" In Bronkhorst–Deshpande (1999: 207–238).

Rau, Wilhelm (1997): "The earliest Literary Evidence for Permanent Vedic Settlements." In Witzel (1997a: 203–206).

Rhys Davids, T.W. – Stede, William (1993): *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Rockenbauer Zoltán (1994): *Ta'aroa. Tahiti mitológia*. [Ta'aroa. Tahitian mythology.] Budapest: Századvég.

Ruzsa Ferenc (1982): *Párhuzamok az ókori ind és a preszókratikus görög filozófiában*. [Parallelisms in ancient Indian and presocratic Greek philosophy.] Unpublished MA thesis at Loránd Eötvös University, Budapest.

Ruzsa Ferenc (1997): *A klasszikus szánkhja filozófiája*. [The philosophy of classical Sāṁkhya.] Budapest: Farkas Lőrinc Imre Könyvkiadó.

Ruzsa Ferenc (1997a): *The triple suffering. A note on the Sāṁkhya-kārikā*. Unpublished paper presented at the 10th World Sanskrit Conference, Bangalore.

Ruzsa, Ferenc (2004): "The meaning of Āruṇi's promise." *Indologica Taurinensia* 30, 229–235.

Ruzsa Ferenc (2005): "A tamil nyelv és az indoárja hangfejlődés." [Tamil and the development of the Indo-Aryan sound system.] In Felföldi Szabolcs (ed.): *Abhivādana. Tanulmányok a hatvanéves Wojtilla Gyula tiszteletére,* 265–273. Szeged: Szegedi Tudományegyetem Ókortörténeti Tanszék.

Ruzsa Ferenc (2005a): *Candrānanda's Commentary on the Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra.* http://www.academia.edu/3102869/Candranandas_Commentary_on_the_Vaise_ika-Sutra

Ruzsa Ferenc (2006): "Puruṣa és Ymir." [Puruṣa and Ymir] *Keréknyomok* 1, 5–22. (Also paper presented at the 13th WSC: "Is the Cosmic Giant an Indo-European myth?")

Ruzsa Ferenc (2009): "Ismerte-e a Mester a Védákat?" [Did the Master know the Vedas?] *Keréknyomok* 5, 24–38.

Sastri, Venkatarama Sharma (1928): "A Note on Bhagavadajjukam." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 5/1, 33–35.

Scharfe, Hartmut (2006): "Indo-Aryan and Dravidian convergence: gerunds and noun composition." In Bertil Tikkanen – Heinrich Hettrich (eds.): *Themes and Tasks in Old and Middle Indo-Aryan Linguistics,* 197–254. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Schiffman, Harold F. (1999): *A Reference Grammar of Spoken Tamil.* Cambridge: Cambridge U.P.

Sedley, David (1999): "Parmenides and Melissus." In A. A. Long (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy,* 113–133. Cambridge U.P.

Sellmer, Sven (1998): *Argumentationsstrukturen bei Parmenides. Zur Methode des Lehrgedichts und ihren Grundlagen.* Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Sen, Prabal Kumar (2011): "The Apoha Theory of Meaning: a Critical Account." In Siderits–Tillemans–Chakrabarti (2011: 170–206).

Sergent, Bernard (1997): *Genèse de l'Inde*. Bibliothèque scientifique Payot. Paris: Payot & Rivages.

Shaffer, Jim G. – Diane A. Lichtenstein (1999): "Migration, Philology and South Asian Archæology." In Bronkhorst–Deshpande (1999: 239–260).

Sharma, Vishnu Prasad – Satkari Sharma Vangiya (eds.) (1994): *Sāṁkhya-kārikā of Srimad Isvarakrisna. With the Matharavritti of Matharacharya and the 'Jayamangala' of Shri Shankara.* Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series 56. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office.[3]

Shastri, Dharmendra Nath (1964): *The Philosophy of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and its Conflict with the Buddhist Dignāga School. (Critique of Indian Realism.)* Delhi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, repr. 1997.

Siderits, Mark – Tillemans, Tom – Chakrabarti, Arindam (2011): *Apoha: Buddhist Nominalism and Human Cognition.* New York: Columbia U.P., repr. Perseus Books Group, Kindle Edition 2011.

Siderits, Mark (2011): "Śrughna by Dusk." In Siderits–Tillemans–Chakrabarti (2011: 283–304).

Simor András (1977): *Sasok és kondorkeselyűk. Navatl és Kecsua költészet*. [Eagles and condors. Nahuatl and Quechua poetry.] Budapest: Magvető.

Singh, Upinder (2009): *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the to the 12th Century*. Delhi: Pearson Education India.

Sinha, Nandalal (tr.) (1915): *The Samkhya Philosophy. Containing (1) Sâmkhya-Pravachana Sûtram, with the Vritti of Aniruddha, and the Bhâṣya of Vijnâna Bhikṣu and extracts from the Vritti-sâra of Mahâdeva Vedantin; (2) Tattva Samâsa; (3) Sâmkhya Kârikâ; (4) Panchaśikha Sûtram.* Allahabad: Panini Office, repr. Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation 1979.

Staal, Frits (1990): *Ritual and Mantras: Rules Without Meaning.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr. 1996.

Staal, Frits (1983): *Agni. The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar.* Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 2001.

Steever, Sanford B. (1998): "Introduction to the Dravidian Languages." In — (ed.): *The Dravidian Languages* (Routledge Language Family Descriptions), 1–39. London: Routledge.

Steiger Kornél (1985): “Parmenidész és Empedoklész kozmológiája.” [The Cosmology of Parmenides and Empedocles.] In *Parmenidész. Empedoklész. Töredékek*. Budapest: Gondolat.

Steiger, Kornél (1986): “Die Kosmologie des Parmenides und Empedokles.” *Oikumene* 5, 173–236.

Steiner, Roland (2007): “Das ‘dreifache Leiden’ in Sāṃkhyakārikā 1.” In Konrad Klaus – Jens-Uwe Hartmann (ed.): *Indica et Tibetica. Festschrift für Michael Hahn*. Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 66. Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 507–519.

Steinkellner, Ernst (ed.) (1991): *Studies in the Buddhist Epistemological Tradition. Proceedings of the Second International Dharmakīrti Conference. Vienna, June 11–16, 1989*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Takakusu, M. J. (1904): “La Sāṁkhyakārikā étudiée à la lumière de sa version chinoise.” *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 4, 1–65.

Takakusu, M. J. (1904a): “La Sāṁkhyakārikā étudiée à la lumière de sa version chinoise (II).” *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 4, 978–1064.

Tandon, S. N. (1995): *A Re-appraisal of Patañjali’s Yoga-Sutras in the light of the Buddha’s Teaching.* Dhammagiri: Vipassana Research Institute.

Ṭhakkura, Anantalāla (1985): *Bhaṭṭa-Vādīndra-racita – Vaiśeṣika-vārtika – Kṛṣṇa-Bhūpāla-racita – Trisūtrī-prakāśā – "jñāta-karttr̥ka-vr̥ttibhir vilasitam maharṣi-Kaṇāda-praṇītam Vaiśeṣika-darśanam.* Mahārājādhirāja-Kāmeśvarasiṁha–Granthamālā 21. Darabhaṅgā: Kāmeśvarasiṁha-Darabhaṅgā-Saṁskr̥ta-Viśvavidyālaya.

Tillemans, Tom (2011): “How to Talk About Ineffable Things: Dignāga and Dharmakīrti on Apoha.” In Siderits–Tillemans–Chakrabarti (2011: 50–63).

Walker, Benjamin (1968): *Hindu World. An Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism.* Allen & Unwin, repr. Delhi: Indus 1995.

Warder, A.K. (1989–2004): *Indian Kāvya Literature*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Watson, Alex (2006): *The Self's Awareness of Itself. Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭhas’s Arguments against the Buddhist Doctrine of No-Self*. Publications of the De Nobili Research Library 32. Wien.

Wayman, Alex (1997): *Untying the Knots in Buddhism. Selected Essays*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

West, M. L. (1971): *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient*. Oxford U.P.

Wijesekera, O.H. de A. (1994): *Buddhist and Vedic Studies. A Miscellany*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Witzel, Michael (1997): “The Development of the Vedic Canon and its Schools: The Social and Political Milieu.” In Witzel (1997a: 257–345).

Witzel, Michael (ed.) (1997a): *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts. New Approaches to the Study of the Vedas.* Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora 2. Cambridge.

Woolner, Alfred C. (1928): *Introduction to Prakrit.* Repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1996.

Wujastyk, Dominik (1998): *The Roots of Āyurveda. Selections from Sanskrit Medical Writings.* Delhi: Penguin Books.

Zimmer, Heinrich (1951): *Philosophies of India.* Edited by Joseph Campbell. Bollingen Series 26. Princeton U.P., repr. 1969.[4]